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MY GARDEN

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS

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MY GARDEN

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PÆONIES AND MAPLES.

UNIV. OF MICH.

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MY GARDEN.

BY

EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

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DEDICATED

to

The Lady of My Garden

" Tell a truth, gay Spring, let us know
What feet they were, that so
Impress'd the earth, and made such various flowers
to grow.

She that led, a queen was at least,
Or a goddess 'bove the rest:
And all their graces in herself exprest.

O, 'twere a fame to know her name;
Whether she were the root;
Or they did take th' impression from her foot."

BEN JONSON.

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MY GARDEN

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is not proposed to submit excuses for this work. Nowadays everybody with a garden larger than a tablecloth rushes into print concerning it, and expects us to follow through the whole procession of the seasons on that particular and precious plot. We are confronted with each plant, grass-blade, and worm-cast; we have the usual quotations from the poets; the usual round of successes during some little passing outburst of climate; the customary failures under our normal conditions of weather. And now I am going to do it all over again; because to remain silent, if you have a garden, is to be notorious. That we may escape charges of eccentricity, therefore, we should all write garden books. In my case the time has come; the task can be evaded no more.

Let there be no obscurity or evasion or misunderstanding. My garden is very small, and I know but little concerning horticulture. I shall be perfectly frank about my failures; I shall speak without false

modesty when I succeed; and I shall hide nothing from you that you may reasonably demand to learn. If in return for this candour you still hold out against my book, you are a churl, and no gardener, and I have done with you.

There are two sterling tests of a true gardener, and neither has been found to fail. First, take nurserymen's catalogues. Should you love these things; should your eye brighten when they reach you; should you make yourself believe them by exercise of pure faith; should you gloat over their luscious adjectives, and neglect your duties, and waste hours in turning their pages when you ought to be justifying existence; should you make lists out of them, and pretend that you are only doing it for fun, yet conclude by getting these lists posted; should you reach a pitch with regard to them when your lawful heirs begin to intercept them and hustle them out of your sight—then you are a real gardener, and I shake your horny hand. Catalogues ought to exercise a fatal fascination upon us. They come to me from every part of the civilised earth excepting Japan; and I dream of a Japanese catalogue soon. But remember, with respect to catalogues, that you must believe what you read. When your heart grows faint, recollect that the men who write these things are artists in their way, and have a sense of colour and size denied to many among us. A good catalogue should be full of poetry, leading delicately up to the prose in the right-hand column where the prices are. For my own part, even now, after all these years, I trust nearly

everything but the pictures of cucumbers. These I refuse to accept, because right well I know that they cannot be produced without the assistance of a dishonest photographer. The cucumbers of the catalogues are pure art. Nature will have none of them, and no more will I. A cucumber six feet in length would be just as absurd as a salmon of those dimensions. Providence very properly seems to regulate the one by the other; and though we may often surprise Nature in a hot-house and—with a high temperature and tons of water—bustle her into the production of something that she would blush for at a cooler moment, yet the fact remains concerning cucumbers, that they have their limits, and those limits lie nearer to three feet than six.

A second grand test of a gardener is the butterfly question. When horticulturists, so-called, invite me to beam upon these gorgeous insects opening and shutting their painted wings in the middle of something that cost money, I know that I am dealing with ignorance, or culpable indifference. If you are an entomologist, well and good. I say nothing. We all have our simple pleasures, and, as Montaigne remarks, "he must fool it a little who would not be thought wholly a fool." At any rate, the more butterflies you catch and pin into boxes, the better I shall like you. Come to me as often as you will during the season, and always count upon a glass of sherry and a biscuit after your sport is done.

But should you be a gardener, the case is very different. We are now dealing with a serious subject,

and there is no place for butterflies in a properly kept border. Off with them! Down with them! Or, if you cannot trust your accuracy, then away with them next door. See that they go and do not return. You will call these cruel words, and perhaps tell me that they only come for nectar. You are in error. Of course, they want all they can get, like everybody else; and there would be no difficulty with me about nectar; but mark this: it is not what a butterfly takes, but what she leaves, that makes me adamant against them. The females of the diurnal lepidoptera lay eggs in a prodigal and generous spirit, and no silly mother of spoilt children has more expensive tastes in the matter of her nursery than they. Nothing at five shillings a dozen will do for them. No; they choose a specimen plant for every accouchement; and with marvellous instinct they select the period immediately before flowering, so that your buds and their eggs shall burst into fulness of life together. Then weak humanity shows temper about Nature's plans, and many a jolly young caterpillar comes to a squashy end. How much better that it should have had no beginning.

I remember a romneya Coulteri just budding deliciously for bloom. Three score lovely glaucous buttons hung on the points of the grey-green foliage; and presently they opened, and great crimped petals, glittering like snow, unfolded about each heart of gold. That corner of the garden was scented as with primroses. The plant stood eight feet high; the sun himself left it reluctantly. Peace and joy and com-

ROMNEYA COULTERI.

UNIV. OF MICH.

plimentary remarks were the order of each day. Look at the picture, and see for yourself what my Mexican poppywort can do. Then began the tell-tale holes and tatters. I hunted, and protested, and examined every branch, and dived head first into the midst of the plant—all in vain. But the powers of darkness came to my aid; I stalked the enemy with a bull's-eye lantern when all good insects slept; and destroyed five-and-twenty lusty green hooligans in a night. They were, of course, gnawing the unopened flower-buds, as I expected.

My garden is formal, I am proud to say; and if it was a thousand acres instead of one, I would still have it formal. You can walk round it in two minutes. The only question is whether it will be worth your while so to do. Mr. Robinson, to whom be all honour for his opinions on this subject, has laid it down that "no garden is more likely to be inartistic than the one rich in plants." He is right—right to the very summit of rectitude; and for this reason I limit myself rigidly—I will be artistic. I have almost a thousand genera, and of some, of course, many species. But I refuse absolutely to go much beyond that number. A thousand genera for one acre of garden will suffice anybody. There are plants, like Sequoia[1] gigantea, that want an acre all to themselves, and these I do not grow. What, after all, is a thousand genera? Hardly one-sixth of the total number known to science. Yet, even with these, one

[1] *Sequoia.* What an interesting definition has this word. The mighty conifer is called after a mighty man: See-qua-yah, a Cherokee chieftain.

may have great moments. For instance, there was the occasion when Kew wrote and asked me for a plant, because Kew had not got it! Upon the receipt of this command I found myself in a sort of horticultural ecstasy; and the apotheosis took a very beautiful form. I seemed to be floating on a rosy cloud between Sir William Thiselton-Dyer and Miss Gertrude Jekyll. Each had me by the hand, and cupids pelted us with the petals of rare hybrids.

The treasure that Kew honoured me by accepting came in a parcel of corms, tubers, bulbs, and seeds from the Zambesi basin. After two years of getting accustomed to the vagaries of my stove-house, this African plucked up spirit and put forth a solitary bloom. It was a lovely purple and golden creature of daintiest habit. I knew it for a gloriosa, but had never seen the like.

Our Royal Gardens welcomed my flower in a spirit of large enthusiasm. The plant turned out to be gloriosa Carsoni, and Kew wanted it. Next autumn I sent a plump tuber, and with the generous instinct of your true gardener, Kew sent in exchange some noble and interesting exotics. Of other goods from the Zambesi, I have flowered gladiolus Melleri (of Baker), and another gladiolus or two not often seen. A white hæmanthus in one box blossomed during his journey home—probably under the impression that it was a case of "now or never." He arrived with a beautiful bloom, but, though still alive, that effort appears to have rendered the plant a chronic sufferer, he has never smiled again. To be honest, a good

deal of ignorance hampers me. I have got plenty of stout, healthy, vigorous bulbs from Central Africa that ought to flower, and evidently can flower, but won't flower. Tropical plants are like Nature's self: they never pardon stupidity. If you muddle with equatorial bulbs, they sooner or later die; and if you muddle with Nature, you do.

This year Carson's gloriosa, encouraged by rumours of its success, has flowered abundantly, and made a specimen of great beauty. It also did well at Kew, and was much admired there.

Now, some people say that there are a couple of simple fundamental rules to follow in a garden; and declare that if they were only observed, we should have no failures. First, master the needs and necessities of a growing thing, both above ground and beneath; secondly, deny yourself that plant unless you can furnish its correct requirements. This perhaps sounds cowardly, and personally I do not insist upon the letter of the rules, though their spirit may be considered. On a garden of London clay, for instance, the results of following this counsel must be so meagre that a gardener's spirit would perish for lack of sustenance. In England we cannot go to such lengths; we have to experiment and probe the possibilities of our climate to their hideous depths. I experiment myself in my nursery. I grow new plants there—that is, plants that are new to me—and compare their achievements with the handsome things alleged about them in the catalogues. Much innocent amusement may be secured in this way

alone. We must experiment. Experiments are the breath in the nostrils of art and science; and evolution is Nature's own eternal experiment. I myself know the man who proved to demonstration that choisya ternata[1] would grow in the open air of the United Kingdom. Thus he has justified his existence nobly, and brought gladness to the hearts of many good gardeners. Who would be without choisya now? No self-respecting spirit surely. I bless Mexico when I think of it.

Yes, emphatically, let us experiment; let us hybridise, let us keep notes about what we do; let us grow lilies from seed, and germinate gentians, and study insect pests; and find the right use for children in a garden. Lines of investigation lie open to all of us; we can each help the science, and it is our duty to do so. But we must be reasonable. There are fundamental, approved, and trusted truisms, which to deny or to defy is vain. I knew a man who set to work to show that it was all nonsense about lilium not liking clay. He might as well have endeavoured to prove that it was all nonsense about pineapple not liking frost.

Begin with your soil, and get a general idea what it is good for. If, as usually happens, it is good for nothing, face the fact like a man; don't evade it, and pretend it will suit roses, and turn what should be a garden into a graveyard. Remember that one good rhododendron, smiling in five shillings' worth

[1] *Choisya ternata.* My dear Palmer, this historic achievement *shall* be recorded to your everlasting credit and renown.

of peat, is better than a dozen dying horribly on a border of lime. If you are entering a new house, never deceive yourself about the garden. In these cases it is customary to take all the débris that the builders rejected, or spoilt, or wasted, and arrange it in heaps outside. It is then dusted over with the stuff dug out of the foundations, and called flower-beds. But bits of brick and lead piping, zinc roofing and sawn wood, broken glass and broken slates, shavings and mortar, lumps of putty and dregs from the soldering ladle, do not make a flower-bed. You may even spread a mulch of broken drain-pipes, fragments of wall-paper and scourings of paint-pots, upon these foundations, and yet produce no plant food worthy of the name. To grow plants, we must have soil; and if you are going to be contented with any substitute, you may be wise, thrifty, and sensible, but you are not a gardener, and should never pretend to that proud name.

Take clay. I would not have enough to make a marble in my garden, if I could help it. Clay should only be suffered in the shape of flower-pots. You murmur the magic word "roses." Well, it is known that they will endure clay; but that is to their credit, not the clay's. A brave man will do his duty in the face of the enemy, and a brave rose will do its duty upon clay. Nevertheless, some rich, deep loam, full of good stuff, would make its heart much happier. I myself lingered on London clay for years; but did I flourish? Far from it. Finally, they had to take me away and give me a bit of peat.

But here I am telling you how to make a garden; which is absurd. There are exactly seven hundred and thirty-four authorities on garden-making, and I am not one of them. You shall, however, if you please, come into my garden and patrol it in an amiable and amateur spirit. We will be technical or trivial, serious or gay, placid or agitated, as the circumstances may warrant. The itinerary is only too brief. First may be taken a general glance round at the things done; then the garden-room and the climbing plants upon it call us. We will proceed to the lofty subject of flowering shrubs, and the treasures of Japan and China in this sort. We may next visit the rock-border, where I have planted a thousand and odd things with my own hand—from a white-flowered cistus that I gathered as a seedling in the myrtle-scented pinewoods of Hyères, to a tiny squill, plucked out of scorched earth on the heights of Bouzaréah, above Algiers. In this section I propose to discuss slugs and their bearing upon the rarer alpines. I shall also detail my experiments with Cape bulbs in the open air, and record the weather they make of it during our English winters. I may then, with your leave, flit off to a few favourite families, including the iris and the lily. Of all flowers, the iris is first in my esteem, and she shall have a chapter—perhaps two—to herself.

There remains my bog basin. Many people would call it a bog garden. But that would not be true. It is merely a basin. My pond is associated with this spot, and among the plants it contains

are some British subjects not as well known as they should be.

There are certain plants whose names always bring pain to my heart and wake bitter memories. Nelumbium is a word I can never hear without a pang; and when people talk of the oncocyclus group of irises, I turn away to conceal my emotion. If these noble things do not occur at great length in the body of the work, you will know that I have misunderstood them again. Don't gloat about it; pass on, like a gentleman, and say nothing. Some people have a lynx's eye for our failures, and cut the successes dead —with an insolent stare, which is very painful to witness. I once took a man to see a sheet of arenaria balearica in flower. It covered a cool corner with glimmering and dewy green, and pearly inflorescence was scattered thickly over it. Its little hands spread out to the damp stones, and a million tiny flowers shone in the shadows with infinite beauty and lustre. The visitor put up his double eyeglasses and peeped about. He ignored the lovely Balearic sandwort, but suddenly said, "Hullo! What's the matter with this petrocallis?"

The matter with the petrocallis was obvious to any eye. Indeed, the poor atom passed away three nights afterwards. No true gardener would have permitted himself to observe its last miseries—unless he had possessed knowledge that could save it. We must carry a magnifying-glass for success, and harbour fellow-feeling for failure. If you cannot in honesty admire a man's carpet bedding, you may be able to

praise his fernery; if his melons are mere sorrowful burlesques of what a melon should be, yet his fig tree will possibly open the way to enthusiasm. I have often found it easy to be genial and laudatory about fig trees—especially in the west of England. This is probably because many gardeners do not pretend to understand them, and leave them altogether alone. The way that English fig trees have of carrying two crops but only ripening one, puzzles professional gardeners to madness, and often lures them into many a rash and unscientific utterance.

Well, that is the programme, speaking roughly. Come in if you will; if the prospect fails to please, go your way in the name of Adam, and peace be with you.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL SURVEY

MY garden was once a field, and there are people still in middle age who remember the scene in those days. Sometimes, from their tone, I suspect they preferred it so. The place slopes south and spreads along a front of sixty yards or more. When I came here the slope was all grass, and supported a single damson tree and one small evergreen oak. At the bottom of this slope a wall arose and hid the kitchen garden. Along the barrier, in a dense mass, there rioted aucubas, laurels, and other mean evergreen things. A fine robinia pseudacacia looked down contemptuously upon this trash. Since then the aucubas have begun to vanish, though a few still linger there. Each autumn some more go; and the laurels also disappear. Their places are taken by prunus Pissardii, cerasus Padus; by buddleia globosa, clumps of phormium, spiræa Lindleyana, a lime tree, a poplar, a shumach and a purple filbert. I have also set out staphylea colchica, liriodendron, calycanthus —the allspice, and a few good thorns and brambles. These things, though not of note, are worthier than those that went before them; and I hope that many may in their turn give place to their betters.

To the east and west of my garden are trees. They belong to my neighbours, and I enjoy them without the responsibility of possession. One, however, bends at an anxious angle over my pond, when westerly gales leap upon us. Some day it may come down; and then the responsibility will be transferred from my neighbour to me.

The western clump of trees is very fine, and many people consider it the making of my patch. A poplar and horse-chestnuts occupy the foreground; behind them stand oaks and a beech; to the south my own robinia adds her light charm, and in the rear an unusually grand elm completes the cluster. All run beautifully together and group well at every season of the year. In winter their grey traceries are broken up by a tangle of ivy. The mass of shadow offers one of those problems a gardener must court and solve. For a shady, eastern-facing wall there are nothing better, in a rough and ready way, than berberis and ceanothus, with Japanese anemones—white and pink, roses, some lilies, white willow herb, larkspurs, lupins, star asters, epimediums, mulgediums, oriental poppies, perennial lobelias—purple and scarlet—and the strawberries, fragaria indica and fragaria lucida to run about where they please. Pepper freely with narcissus bulbs. Of course, many other good creatures will occur to you; and, if you want class, you must look higher, prepare a really distinguished soil, and plant the noble shade-lovers from Chili and elsewhere. I have one very dark spot covered with ferns, out of which rise a couple

MY NEIGHBOUR'S TREES.

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of hundred narcissus poeticus in spring-time. They make pure light there while the golden-green, young fern-fronds are uncurling.

My expanse of meadow grass I treated in this way. There is a first terrace before the house whereon lie five flower-beds. They are devoted to spring bedding. Many people reject it; but I must have begonias during summer and tulips in spring. If the beds are bare from November onward, what matter? I note a dread to behold the naked face of the Mother manifested by some gardeners. They submit plans by which you may escape a sight of the soil from year's end to year's end. But I love to see the bare ground unveiled in winter, and watch it drinking the rain or glittering under the frost. Annuals have also to be considered, and I hold out for some of them against all comers. After years of experimenting, I have brought my annuals down to about a dozen that answer to the most tremendous tests. These must have room; and some should be sown where they are to bloom, if you propose to do them justice. As to tulips, I am not greatly attached to "breeders," or even Bybloemens, but prefer the "self" colours in masses—scarlet, orange, lemon, purple, and white. I own a weakness for "parrots" also. They are so opulent and bold and orientally gorgeous. How people can plant beds of squat hyacinths when they may have tulips, has always been a mystery to me. You must choose between the joy of your eye and the delight of your nose. It is the difference between a row

of militiamen and a bevy of opera dancers. A gardener's hyacinth has no excuse for its existence in my opinion; nor has a double tulip. In face of the might of Holland, I declare these things. But it must be confessed that I am prejudiced in the matter of most double flowers. Certainly "flore pleno" always checks my enthusiasm. Even that grand phrase, "duplex varieties," which our horticultural specialists sometimes soar to, seldom catches me. Of course, one excepts many noble things, but, speaking generally, form is lost. There are, perhaps, twenty double flowers that no garden can do without; but not more.

Below my top terrace I have cut another, and made a rock-border there. It is forty-five yards long, and built up two feet high in front. It rises to a height of five feet, and is about seven or eight feet broad. Paths run through it, and a straight walk stretches in front. Shade-loving alpines have another place called the "red rockery," because it is built of sandstone conglomerate. This of which I now speak lies in the eye of the sun, and I call it the "white rockery." It is made of limestone. I find there are not many saxifrages that object to our sun, though in their homes the encrusted sorts appear rather to avoid it. In Italy I found one of this species clinging to the eastern face of moist rocks; but their root-hold was extremely slight; they were growing in sheets of moss; and no doubt in such quarters the noon sun would have been too much for them. It was an object-lesson on the science of planting

ROSE BORDER IN WINTER.

CLEMATIS VITALBA.

alpines to see them flourishing upon the perpendicular granite. A lovely rock-foil that does detest hot sunshine is Don Pedro del Campo's, generally called Camposii. Probably there are many others that I have not got which also object. Umbrosa, despite its name, seems to be happy enough in sunshine.

On the south side of the path bordering my white rockery are deep borders for roses, with a row of pillars behind for noisettes, Ayrshires and other pillar and climbing sorts.

Then comes another drop, and a wall appears for delicate shrubs and choice trailing things. The main mass of the lawn extends beyond, with the red rockery lying to the east of it and the garden-room to the west. Then occur peat-beds for rhododendrons, lilies, and American plants. These lie on either side of the pond and bog basin. To the left of my house is a cool corner also devoted to lilies and such things; on the right of the dwelling extends a deep, protected border for shrubs and herbaceous plants. Before the front door rises a bank fringed with German irises: purple, white, blue, yellow, chocolate, and rose, and the many half-tints between. Above them rise doronicums, that blossom with them, Solomon's seals, senecios, roses, genista, and cytisus. Then ascend aralias, eucalyptus, exochorda, syringas, almonds, a birch tree and a yew. Over the last during autumn clematis vitalba spreads her veil of silver-grey. This bank sounds better than it looks, because in the words we get a suggestion of spaciousness that does not really belong to it.

Of my house I say nothing. It belongs to the most uncompromising stucco period, and is hideous without ceasing from doorstep to chimney. I am trying hard to conceal it; but it resists vegetable loveliness with a grim ferocity. We shall smother it in time, though the operation may take years. Every winter I urge on vitis inconstans and solanum jasminoides with praise and rich mulches; every year I encourage renewed efforts from passiflora "Constance Elliott," from roses, the giant magnolia, and other willing and hearty things; and next spring buddlea variabilis is going to help; but there is much yet to be desired; indeed, at one point only does the sulky face of my dwelling entirely disappear. Here dwells a Banksian rose thirty feet high, whose creamy glories atone for much in spring. Chimonanthus also covers a good patch of wall with its fragrant leaves during summer, but when pale lemon flowers stud the plant in January their beauty is lost against the dismal stucco behind them. To see chimonanthus fragrans as a shrub, standing alone like a flame of scented fire, as one does in the south of France, is a noble experience.

My hideous house is one of similar hundreds. They are called "villa residences." Nature made this place as beautiful as any spot in Devon; then came the doctors and said that it was good; and then rushed in a horde of builders who piled up stucco with feverish activity for those people the doctors directed to come here. We live in what is called a "resort"—that word of dreadful note.

Certainly one kind of folk who never did resort hither were architects of taste. Stucco stared from the top of every hill; stucco squatted toad-like in every valley; and then volatile Harley Street jilted us; the Riviera rose from out the azure sea; and we cater for quite another kind of "resorters" now. These folk desire piers and promenades, winter palaces with brass bands playing in them, and refreshment bars that run round three sides of the building. They expect musical entertainments hourly; and they like automatic machines stationed at every few yards for the production of sweetmeats, cigarettes, scent, and post-cards. They are ready to drop their pennies into anything that will offer them a new sensation. We of the old guard note the occurrence of the bands and winter palaces in the rates. But we do not seek them; we do not need them; and we never go near them. Our sun is fast setting; we belong to the grand old stucco period; we linger on, like bluebottles in October, and we pay our increasing taxes to the end. An hour is close at hand when men with black faces and comic hats will play our requiem upon the tambourine and bones. What must happen to the "resort" after we are all sleeping in our expensive tombs, I tremble to think. Succeeding generations may visit the ruins of our villas and speculate upon the race that inhabited them. Sermons may be preached (if sermons are still permitted) to the "resorters" of the time to come. They will be told to take warning by our luxury and indolent ease; there may even rise some Gibbon to tell the tragic

story of our decline and fall. Nevertheless, not a little can be said on our side also. It is we who made the place—not the tradesmen. I warn our busy merchant princes that the resorters they now seek to lure among us won't pay the present prices for anything—from a piano to a bootlace; and they won't rebuild our villas when we have departed from them. Try as the local authorities will to catch the spirit of Margate, or emulate the merry promiscuity of Herne Bay, it cannot be done. We are too far from the genial influence of the metropolis for that. Personally, I merely wait here in dignified patience and self-control for the advent of the first Ethiopian serenader. He may already be here, but I have not met with him. When I do, I shall rise up, and take my staff, and hie me to the recesses of certain mountains where resorters cease from troubling and the tax-gatherers are at rest. Yes, you local geniuses, you are killing the goose with the golden egg, and seeking those that produce only copper and silver. There is a dreadful day of reckoning at hand.

My kitchen garden now offers little to attract the æsthetic eye; though once I grew nothing in it but flowers, and then it was a very beautiful spectacle. To see annuals in perfection, a mere paltry patch is not enough. But given a few square yards of each, and we realise their beauty. My kitchen garden blazed with colour and hummed with bees in those days. From broad streaks and flames and patches of scarlet and gold, blue and white, orange and lavender, the fruit trees sprang; then came a shadow

of discontent, and my other and higher self began to hint at the price of vegetables. I turned the thing off lightly for a year; but certain ominous incidents continued to show me that the danger grew. Of course, any garden divided against itself is as bad as a house in the same shattering predicament. A climax was reached, and my gardener ranged himself against me. This appeared suicidal from his point of view, because, in the event of vegetables, my personal assistance was gone for ever; while, as things stood, I did half the work of my nursery. But Sharland is a man of character, and he has made vegetables his particular life study. His past teems with successes in the matter of culinary herbs and roots; and it had always been a grievance with him that I refused to grow them. He was therefore against me.

I procrastinated for some time; then I prepared this dreadful list and asked my wife's opinion upon it. I read it out to her after dinner, and told her that these plants were my latest additions to the treasures in my garden.

"Now," I said, "listen to them, and add anything that strikes you:—

Brassica, six varieties, including oleracea botrytis, asparagoides and bullata gemmifloram,
Crambe maritima,
Faba vulgaris,
Phaseolus vulgaris,
Phaseolus multiflorus,
Beta vulgaris,
Daucus carrota,
Apium graveolens,
Pisum sativum, four varieties,
Solanum tuberosum,
Rheum,
Spinacia oleracea,
Carum Petroselinum,
Peucedanum sativum,

Raphanus sativus,
Allium Cepa, five varieties, including Porrum,
Lactuca sativa, two varieties,
Lycopersicum esculentum,
Tragopogon porrifolium,
Salvia officinalis,
Cynara Scolymus,
Helianthus tuberosus,
Mentha viridis,
Thymus vulgaris,
Cucumis Melo,
Cucumis sativus,
Cucurbita Pepo ovifera
Solanum melongena — var. ovigerum.

"Can you improve upon that?" I asked, "because now is the time. You are going from home, and, when you return, most of these things ought to be ready to welcome you."

Her face fell.

"I did hope you would have given way about the vegetables," she said.

"You evade the question," I answered. "Can you, or can you not, better my list as it stands?"

"I don't know anything about it," she replied. "All I do know is that you won't find room for half of them. No doubt they are all expensive. You seem to have a curious way of selecting your plants by the cost; and if ever you had to sell them again, you know perfectly well what would happen."

"All these things are cheap enough," I told her. "With one or two exceptions, they will be grown from seed."

"And will, of course, take up every atom of room as usual. You promised — faithfully promised — a border of parsley." There were tears in her voice as she answered.

I sighed. There were tears in my voice too.

CHIMONANTHUS FRAGRANS.

"Yes," I admitted; "they will take up every atom of room worth mentioning, as you say."

"Then why grow them?" she asked. "Surely you have enough rubbish in the garden. At least, I don't mean rubbish exactly, but sombre things that are merely botanically interesting. Now this list of plants that nobody ever heard of—I'm sure they can't be interesting—not all of them."

"Not one," I assured her. "They are about as dull as ditch-water. I know them—intimately. But Sharland is so exceedingly anxious to have them."

"That's absurd," said my wife sternly. "You ought not to give in to the gardener as you do. Please be firm about it, and tear up this list at once."

"You really say that?" I asked.

"Yes, I do," she replied.

"Honestly you advise me to destroy this list?"

"Honestly. You remember the last half-hardy list that I made you tear up. You were glad afterwards when the blizzard came, and thanked me."

I took my paper from her hand.

"You shall have your way," I said. "But before destroying these notes, it may interest you to hear their story in English."

"Not at all," she declared. "I love flowers as well as you do—perhaps better; but there are times—Frankly, I can't help feeling rather hurt about the kitchen garden. Fresh vegetables are so grotesquely dear here. No, I'm not interested in these plants."

"Nevertheless," I answered, "I will read them to you in our own tongue. As a personal favour, oblige

me by listening to them. The gardener, I repeat, was delighted with them. He has already planned the ground, and will be much disappointed."

Then I read out the dismal tale, and, with the glamour of a dead language stripped from it, each item fell upon my wife's ear in stark English :—

"Cabbage, six varieties, including broccoli and Brussels sprouts,
Seakale,
Broad beans,
French beans,
Runner beans,
Beetroot,
Carrot,
Celery,
Peas, four varieties,
Potatoes,
Rhubarb,
Spinach,
Parsley,
Parsnip,
Radish,
Onion, five varieties, including leeks,
Lettuce, two varieties,
Tomato,
Salsify,
Sage,
Globe artichokes,
Jerusalem artichokes,
Mint,
Thyme,
Melons,
Cucumbers,
Marrows,
Aubergine."

Of all beautiful flowers in nature, there is none more beautiful than the smile of my wife. Unprejudiced people will vouch for it.

She smiled now. She said, "It's lovely ; but you've missed asparagus !"

"Into the waste-paper basket they go !" I answered, and suited the action to the word. But she quickly dived after them ; and now they can all be seen in their seasons—poor, harmless, necessary wretches—covering my good ground and sprawling under my good frames.

Not that everything went smoothly; far from it. When the actual struggle began with uprooting and deep digging, I had many a painful hour. I felt much as Adam must have felt when he was driven foot by foot out of the Original Garden. I crept away before serried ranks of Spring onions. Cabbage in all its plebeian luxuriance marched coarsely, triumphantly onward, and thrust me before it; eschalots advanced in echelon; potatoes turned my right flank; tomatoes scaled my walls; Sharland led his legions in person, and was prepared to die for them in the last trench. So that smiling region was converted into a utilitarian waste. Finally I threw up a bank of Indian corn and refused to abandon another yard. Then, while the enemy was busy perfecting his formations, dark thoughts came to me of a counter-attack. I dreamed of planting sun-flowers among the Jerusalem artichokes, and mixing sweet peas with the green ones. It would have been magnificent, but not war.

At present the limits are fixed, and, like Canute to the sea, I have said to this green ocean of culinary stuff, "Thus far and no farther." Probably the result will be the same. Only yesterday I saw Sharland looking thoughtfully at a sunny corner, as the farmer regards his fattening porkers. I know what is in his mind. I have seen him and my wife in deep converse there. They spring apart guiltily when I suddenly pop up from a patch of something. But I am not deceived.

There are, however, certain oases left in this desert

of nourishment. My alströmerias—a bed of them five yards long and one broad—are well established and wonderful to see in summer. These so far have escaped. I will say of my gardener that he is a sportsman. He felt that it would be wicked folly to attack these fine things. He came to them after a great victory over calystegia pubescens. Alströmeria met him in the hour of success, and he spared it. I suspected that calystegia was merely scotched and not killed; but the issue proved that hydra actually slain. I had secreted a few tentacles after the battle was over, however, and the flower is still with me.

UNIV. OF MICH.

THE GARDEN ROOM.

CHAPTER III

THE GARDEN-ROOM

UPON the left-hand side of my garden is a range of shrubs. It starts with a big araucaria imbricata, or monkey-puzzler, proceeds to laburnum, deutzia, berberis, Portugal laurel, yew, and euonymus. These mingle together, and the row terminates with an arbutus. Remember to accent the first syllable of this word. Only scholars, familiar with the classics, pronounce it correctly; and one of them put me right in the matter. An American author was good enough recently to send me a poem. With excellent art it extolled the beauties of the Brandywine River; and this line occurred in it :—

"Home of arbutus and primeval pine."

If the poet had written,

"Home of primeval pine and arbutus,"

nobody could have found any fault.

Against this tall bank of handsome nobodies there cuddles my garden-room. It is shaped like Cupid's bow, with the entrance at the handle. Half has been covered with red tiles; the remainder of the roof is an open cage, and over it many climbing plants make a translucent canopy of flowers and cool green

light in summer. The structure has no walls, but is supported by red brick pillars; and outside it run two tiers of beds semicircled to the shape of the edifice. On the right of the garden-room stands a ginkgo, in foliage like an enormous maiden-hair fern, and, close by, the cercis makes a bright rosy cloud with its inflorescence in spring-time. Below it ceanothus, "gloire de Versailles," prospers in the arms of the Judas tree. To the left is a very warm and snug corner. Here, in the lew, as we say, stands a prosperous acacia. Its glaucous green comes very beautifully against a bank of escallonia behind; it flowers industriously, but the quality of the bloom is uncertain, for our spring weather too often ruins it. At the feet of this monarch of my garden, melianthus major, the Cape honey flower, prospers with lovely sea-green foliage, and a young chamærops Fortunei thrives close by. This Chusan palm is, of course, perfectly hardy in the west country. I have only room for one, but, where space happens to be no object, they should be turned freely into the open air as soon as they get too large and clumsy for ordinary pot management. A cousin of mine, who is a gardener of distinction, when she finds that a few of these palms are beginning to defy management, turns them out of doors and plants them in threes at the corners of large triangular beds. Seen thus, they present a very imposing appearance. During summer, palms should be supported with musa, or, failing him, with cannas in variety, with caladium esculentum, clumps of agapanthus, and

plants of hedychium Gardnerianum. Of these, only the caladium comes indoors during winter with me.

A very favourite foliage plant of mine is this elephant's ear. Some monster roots came to me from the tropics, and they have gone from strength to strength. The mighty leaves, full of wonderful, mingled greens, are grand to see. It prospers anywhere, but best likes my bog basin, assumes quite enormous dimensions there, and reflects its huge leaves in the pond. I dig it up to put it out of danger in the winter, and that corner of the garden always seems lonely when it has gone. Everybody knows the feeling of desertion after some favourite thing passes away and leaves a whole weary year to be endured without it; but I never heard of any other gardener feeling the least sentiment about elephant's ear. Of course, if one transfers it to a pot and keeps it in the greenhouse or conservatory, it will go on with the business of living cheerfully enough. This is what I have to do with wigandia Vigieri also. I reduce his luxuriance, trim him back and pot him up long before danger of frosts. I fell in love with him lolling over a wall at Mentone. There he attains the size of a small tree, and flowers magnificently. In February he is a mass of fine purple blossom above the gigantic leaves, and gladdens the heart in company with acacia, tecoma, sparmannia, roses, and citrons in fruit. I have grown wigandia from seed, and during summer he makes noble efforts to justify himself with us; but the time of genial temperature is too short, and he has to be

shorn and hustled indoors just as he begins to reveal his character and get hopeful about his future. The slightest touch of frost upsets a young plant, and reduces it to limp and ragged death.

Now, concerning the creeping and trailing things upon my garden-room, it must be confessed that there is not space for more than twenty or so. The quantity is meagre, but the quality may be accounted fair. Vitis, of course, comes first among deciduous climbers, and of these vitis vinifera only happens by chance. You would hardly expect him; but I had a black Hamburg, whose room was wanted for something else; so out she came, and here she is; and a great fuss she made about it. Though I gave her a cosy corner, with the arbutus to shelter her and a purple clematis to hug her into a good temper, she sulked for two years before she began to settle down. She has not even yet, in her third out-of-door year, considered the question of fruit. Vitis heterophylla, from Japan, is a strong and free-growing vine. This fruits late with me; but I generally see the berries really ripe with their amethystine bloom. From purple they go to a lovely azure, like the sky of spring. The variegated species is a more delicate and dainty customer, but splendid for a big rockery. Vitis Labrusca, the "fox" grape, has not considered fruiting for an instant up to the present time; though he grows steadily. He came two years ago from America, in a cardboard box, and he had for company some nelumbiums and a slug. Sentiment, of course, is out of place within the borders of a garden, and an

emotional nature will seldom be found together with the highest records in horticulture. I confess to hesitation about that slug. It seemed hard to have come so far merely to die. If he had been a showy and dashing slug, it is very probable I should have spared him and let him loose, hoping that he was one of the meat-eating, harmless, useful variety; but there was nothing to elevate him above other slugs except the accident of American birth. For some reason or other he put me in mind of the West Indian turtles—those poor monsters that are captured by the light of the moon when they come ashore with their wives, in Tobago and elsewhere. After entering captivity they are branded on the yellow shells of their stomachs; they are hoisted aboard steamers by their flippers and despatched homeward to death. Death too often overtakes them long before they reach England. I once came back from the West Indies in a great storm, and the sole bright spot of each desolate and anxious day was turtle-soup for dinner. If, however, the unhappy reptiles get to London alive, instantly they have their poor throats cut and their precious juices extracted to support aldermen by night and stock-jobbers by day.

My slug died, and I consoled myself with the reflection that he had lived a full life, enjoyed some great experiences for a slug, and crossed the Atlantic in a crack mail steamer without paying a cent for his passage.

Vitis purpurea has beautiful claret-coloured foliage; while the leaves of vitis Coignetiæ, or Madame Coig-

net's vine, take gorgeous tints of scarlet and crimson during October. V. Thunbergii will be found even more splendid in death. Numerous other rare and distinct vines I lack, and two of the most beautiful, V. arborea and V. flexuosa major, from the Southern United States, I have only seen at Kew Gardens. Of late we can record notable additions to the family. It seems that Vitis, Ampelopsis, and Cissus are now, very wisely, merged into one genus. It is pleasant for us duffers to know that even the highest botanical swells may get themselves into hopeless muddles sometimes. This happened with respect to vitis, for many of the varieties are dicœcious, which means that the male and female plants keep themselves to themselves—just as husbands and wives have occasionally been known to flourish best in separate establishments. Deluded by this aloofness, botanists have given different names to the different sexes; and some species have actually had to struggle under as many synonyms, or aliases, as a begging-letter writer. Then the great men show one another up, and you and I snigger, in our rude amateur way, when we hear of professors coming to grief thus and actually getting hot about it, and saying bitter things concerning stamens and pistils and so forth. It is the mark of the average small professor that he absolutely hates to be wrong. He begins by seeking truth; too often he ends by denying it to every theory other than his own. Indeed, the curse of teaching seems to be that one so often develops from it an objection to learn. But now all these errors about vitis are going to be cor-

rected. We have the authority of Mr. James H. Veitch that light is dawning upon this confusion; and no man knows more about the matter than does he. To Veitch—name of immortal memory—we owe countless botanical treasures, and every season adds to our obligations. Many new and exquisite vines can now be obtained, and, among lovely things that I am open to receive from anybody (and will pay carriage), are the true vitis Thunbergii; vitis Californica, a tremendous grower; vitis aconitifolia, a gem from China; vitis armata, the beautiful thorny variety from Central China; and vitis megaphylla, most distinct of all the new arrivals in this family. It is worth repeating here that vitis inconstans, or ampelopsis Veitchi—undoubtedly the best known garden climber in the world—was introduced to England by the late Mr. John Gould Veitch. He discovered it at Fusiyama, in Japan, during 1860, upon the occasion of the first ascent of that sacred mountain by Europeans; and eight years later the plant began to be distributed. Lilium auratum was met with during the same expedition. What a red-letter day! I should be inclined to give my gardener a whole holiday upon that anniversary if I knew it.

After vitis one thinks of clematis. The vine and he are good friends, and seem to prosper in company. Cirrhosa, followed by Montana, begins the show; then comes Jackmanni. One of these has climbed into my arbutus, and, from that point, occasionally deludes the philistine into thinking that I have a new shrub. The lanuginosas — white, lavender, and purple-red — are

never weary of flowering with me. A viticella hangs apart, and has made a Siberian crab her home; and graveolens, the yellow clematis, prospers on a "John Downy" apple tree. I believe this sort of thing is hardly classical, but in a little spot, like my garden, we cannot have trees wasting their branches when the slight creepers and climbers are waiting for necessary support. Everything has got to lend a hand or a bough here. We all work together, and we shall struggle on until my entire acre is swallowed up. Then I propose passing the enterprise over to Nature, and shall stand aside and interfere no more, and watch the survival of the fittest, and make scientific notes on the relative vitality of contending genera.

For some stupid reason only known to himself, clematis coccinea has so far flowered but sparingly. He reaches the budding stage, then gives up and pretends the year's work is done. The annual struggle into the boughs above him leaves him indifferent and spiritless when the time for bloom arrives. A very little more of this malingering, and the Texan goes. I can have no skulking in my garden. He has got all he wants; he is among friends. There is not a shadow of excuse, unless it be, indeed, that he lives too near his relatives. However, one has no leisure for these family affairs. I give clematis coccinea a last chance. Let him fail to justify himself again, and his place shall know him no more. Probably a gay, young coccinea hybrid will appear instead; and I ought to select "Sir Trevor Lawrence," because, even in form of a coccinea cle-

matis, it is only right that such a notable name among gardeners should be represented here. Clematis Davidiana is a variety of C. tubulosa, and has a long-tubed bloom and stiff, upright habit.

Clematis alpina, or atragene alpina, according to the older authorities, must be considered a pearl above price. People don't make enough fuss about this treasure, and very few grow it. I have three feeble things, but when I want to see what it can do at its best, I visit the garden of a friend, where it may be seen in full beauty. It occurs in Siberia, in Austria, in the Pyrenees, and in Manchuria. To see it flourishing wild must be a noble experience. If coloured pictures lie not, the Austrian plant is the best. Certainly that is lovely, but I have seen no other.

Let us now turn to some more climbers. Akebia quinata grows on my garden-room—a hardy plant enough here, and fond of peat. Next to him—also in peat—flourishes mitraria coccinea—a beautiful scarlet-flowered shrub with climbing aspirations. It is hardier than people seem to think. Mine came from the open in Scotland, blooms freely, and grows with steadiness. Wistaria chinensis skirts along the top of my red tiles and prospers there; aristolochia sipho also goes slowly ahead. As a flowerer he is doubtless a poor thing compared with some of his hot-house relations; but the huge foliage may be called fine, and it takes a good colour during autumn. Periploca græca harbours next to him, and shows him how to grow. In July it is a mass of little brown stars. This

silk vine does almost too well, and may ere long have to pursue his progress elsewhere. The reward of luxuriance in a small garden is often the reward of zeal in a small world. People, and some plants, know this; they perceive how easy it is to over-do it, and they err on the safe side. Gardeners, for instance, are only liable to the negative error. The over-zealous gardener is a fearful wild fowl, but fortunately as rare as the unicorn. Some industrious things have already been banished from my garden-room. Salpichroa rhomboidea had to go. He did in one season an amount of work that would have been quite reasonable and creditable in ten years. At the end of the autumn, Sharland, a boy and myself tackled him together. We threw ourselves on him, held him down, and lopped off a thousand branches. Then, when he became weaker from loss of sap, we dug him up and carried him off. He was borne insensible to the kitchen garden, and, while still unconscious, dropped into a hole under an old russet apple tree. This year he is sprawling everywhere as if nothing had happened to him, and the old russet has been enveloped. Though it may seem harsh to say so, salpichroa[1] is not a plant for a gentleman's garden. I don't assert that he is vulgar, but coarse he certainly must be called. His fate has been already determined so far as I am concerned. I shall throw him out

[1] *Salpichroa.* By the way, the Supplement of Professor Nicholson's grand Dictionary of Gardening tells us that this plant is half hardy and suitable for trellises. Don't believe it. Salpichroa is as hardy as a polar bear.

THE GARDEN ROOM.

UNIV. OF HAWAII

CEANOTHUS "GLOIRE DE VERSAILLES."

upon some lonely, desolate waste by night; or else, perhaps, poison him in his drink. He comes from Buenos Ayres, and ought not to have been moved from there.

How different is the conduct of dioscorea japonica. This great tuber lies deep and snug under the central pillar of the garden-room. From here it annually sends up a sprightly bine, which leaps aloft and tumbles and twines about with pretty heart-shaped leaves, like bryony. A similar trifling inflorescence it also possesses. The foliage takes a fine pure yellow tone in October, and sprays of it can then be cut to accompany your star asters. Apios tuberosa does not appeal to me. He is, however, fairly regular in his habits, and, though a subterranean wanderer, comparatively steady. Thladiantha dubia, on the contrary, possesses some sense of humour, and plays the wildest pranks underground. I have a bachelor plant—consequently no fruit occurs. He first came up from where I put him, and hung out his handsome leaves and golden bells; he rejoiced me and vanished. But next year, when I was prepared to welcome him in the old spot, he did not appear. Presently, however, I found him ramping riotously yards away from his former home. I have given up trying to catch him, and let him go where he likes, merely decapitating him when he thrusts forth a downy nose in April at some impossible place. The difficulty, of course, is to "locate" him, as the Americans say. You may grub about for yards before you find the tubers that will give next year's exhibition. "Dubia" is an excellent

name for him, because we never know where to have him; but he received it for other reasons. Eccremocarpus scaber merely calls for respectful mention. Adlumia cirrhosa won't prosper with me, which is hard, for I admire this little North American biennial exceedingly. I am frightened of rhus toxicodendron, the poison vine, though to see it in autumn is a good sight. I knew a great gardener who tamed the poison ivy—charmed it, apparently. He could handle it without hurt; but most people suffer more or less from contact with the wicked thing. Celastrus scandens I do not find specially attractive. It grows tremendously, but I have as yet failed to note the beautiful fruit of the catalogues, though my plant is now an adult in flourishing circumstances. Abobra viridiflora lives beside this staff vine, and annually twines her dainty foliage into the hardier thing. But I have seen neither her fragrant inflorescence nor scarlet berries. There may be some conspiracy between these two plants to deny me fruition. Another year of sterility will have to see them separated. Abobra might possibly do better if dug up and treated like a dahlia; but I find so much to do in my garden that I am most unwilling to disinter anything which can safely be trusted underground. My Cape bulbs with their last dying foliage wave imploring messages to me to remove them, and either pot or store them against the accumulated horrors of our early springtime; but only in certain cases do I take the least notice. Many of them surprise themselves by their constitutions, and come braced and healthy to business in April;

others, I find, have gone where the good bulbs go. But touching that matter you shall hear anon.

A scarlet rambler and a common hop potter about together over a corner of my garden-room; and there ought to be many more other roses. Cucumis perennis catches my eye next with great, grey-green leaves; but this is another of the plants that always arrive a day behind the fair. Autumn surprises it arranging its wares, and, at the first breath of serious cold, it flings up everything, discards its immature buds, drops its leaves, and hurries underground again. The native place of this perennial cucumber is doubtful. That is to be regretted. Perhaps, if we knew where he came from, we might learn the climatic conditions there, and attempt to reproduce them. No doubt a cool house would answer the purpose.

There is never any trouble about the flowering of polygonum baldschuanicum from Bokhara. He gives me two displays—in spring and autumn. The open part of my garden-room supports him, and he foams with flowers there in a beautiful sheet of palest rose. He is a tremendous grower, and will soon be in the trees, tumbling among them. Muehlenbeckia showers its beauty elsewhere. This plant is no great climber but an excellent tumbler—good to fill a spare corner or flank a flight of steps. Above or beside it should be set some straight, stiff, sword-like thing—gladiolus or iris. Then you will be pleased at the effect. Everlasting peas don't appeal to me, except the handsome and tender lathyrus pubescens, but they occur here; and actinidia volubilis from Japan I also have,

together with berchemia and menispermum canadense, the moon-seed. The orange-red mutisia decurrens, though slightly fussy and hard to please, has been invited to try in a sheltered spot. His dwelling-place is the Chilian Andes, and one does not blame him for a little home-sickness.

I come to tropæolum. Majus looks after himself in my garden and we meet him everywhere rambling joyously about in summer-time. Sometimes I smile if he has made a happy choice, and selected some barren corner for his fireworks; and sometimes I frown, and seize him and drag him up and hurl him out, if, too greatly daring, he has rushed in where perhaps the choicest creeper or twiner would fear to tread. But I like this Indian upon the place. He has something in common with a good-hearted but neglected dog. He asks for nothing and gets it. If we bestow upon him a friendly pat sometimes, he can hardly believe his luck. Tropæolum speciosum is one of the plants that brings a sigh with it if you live by the southern sea. We all declare that we grow it; but we never bother you to come and see the result. We never photograph it; we hurry past it; our faces fall when that tropæolum is the matter. No, the flame-flowered nasturtium is but little good to us.[1] Of course I know what it does in Scotland. There is no consolation in that. I become mean and petty about tropæolum speciosum now, when north-country folk expatiate upon it. "Yes," I say, "I hear

[1] Some gardeners, however, do well with it among us. They are the rare geniuses, who do well with everything.

it does fairly well with you; but have you seen it in Chili?" They have not—more have I—yet the mere question depresses them, and enables me swiftly to change the subject. I may remark that tropæolum tuberosum does extremely well here, and polyphyllum is one of the prides of my rockwork in June. T. pentaphyllum, however, refuses to bloom with me out of doors. He comes from Buenos Ayres, like salpichroa, but lacks that well-meaning ruffian's giant energy, and must have an indoor place. The Canary creeper I despise, and with greenhouse tropæolums—such as Jarrattii and azureum—I have absolutely and utterly failed.

There remains, among perennial things, to note lonicera. Fragrantissima grows on my garden-room, but none else. To be frank, I have lost heart about honeysuckles since seeing lonicera Hildebrandiana on the west wall of a friend's house. There it revels and reaches to the roof. Its extraordinary foliage and immense and fragrant trumpets of bloom—each four inches long and of the most glorious sunrise hue—are a wonder and a delight. After beholding such a honeysuckle, I feel that Nature has spoken the highest possible word on this subject, and lift up my voice, and bless Upper Burma for her invaluable achievement. But who was this Hildebrand?

CHAPTER IV

THE GARDEN-ROOM (*continued*)

DURING this Autumn I have missed Fame by a hair's breadth. The matter belongs to annual climbers, and may therefore be introduced upon this page. It concerns a gourd that I brought with me from one of the most beautiful gardens in Europe. When I say that the gourd came from Sir Thomas Hanbury's place, La Mortala, near Mentone, those who have walked through that glorious scene will know all about it. Sir Thomas took a slice of the Italian coast and, enchanter that he is, turned it into the most wonderful fairyland of flowers that shall be found even upon the margins of the Mediterranean. There are things in those gardens that make one sigh with pleasure even to remember. There are plants unique in cultivation flourishing there. I say 'unique' deliberately, for these specimens long ago reached that happy valley, and no man now knows whence they originally came. The mighty ones of Kew pay pilgrimages to La Mortala, and bow down and worship at the feet of the succulents there assembled. Their owner himself declared to me that the flowers of some among his stapelias are more amazing than any orchid. The aloes flame like fire; the agaves attain proportions

beyond one's dreams; there is no such collection of citrons in Europe—from citrus Aurantium Bergamia, the bergamot orange, to the wonderful 'Buddha's fingers,' they range, through every variety of shaddock, lemon, lime, kumquat, and mandarin. In one spot there shall be seen half an acre of anemones—the most beautiful sheet of pure colour that I have ever beheld. Rare trees rise before you at every turn. Blossoms fall in scented showers upon the wanderer; water tinkles from dim green nests of exotic ferns; the fragrance and the loveliness of innumerable roses haunt each glade; in the wild portions of the estate, Nature has her free way, and indigenous oleanders blossom by a mountain stream. The blue sea hems in all. Upon my first visit I was so much moved that I made an epigram about this garden. The effort, however, created no special attention; but it shall not perish unrecorded.

> "To gild refined gold and paint the lily
> Are feats that most of us consider silly;
> But you, who laid this jewel by the sea,
> Have added loveliness to Italy."

Of course twenty such books as mine would not serve to tell of one-half the wonders at La Mortala. I am merely concerned with a single magic gourd grown there and brought home by me to this country. To the eye it lacked any particular significance, being merely a little golden fruit, rather flat in shape, and about the size of a large orange. In the spring I opened it, took six seeds from five hundred, and planted them. They came up at once, and were

duly set out during May. All prospered and all fruited freely. But now began the enchantments of Sir Thomas—that horticultural Prospero of the Italian seaboard. Those six vines bore no less than four distinct varieties of fruit! I show you a picture of them, and can bring witnesses to prove the story. Two plants produced flat, small gourds, like the parent; two furnished a gourd also flat, but larger than the first, and marked with alternate bars of dark and light green; one vine carried an oval gourd of a very dark green throughout; and the last bore warted fruit, rather bigger than an ostrich's egg, of a pale corn-colour, streaked and splashed with brilliant orange.

Now this is a most interesting experience, and botanists ought to make a great deal of it. What troubles me is not so much the scientific side, as the opportunity that I have thrown away. Had I guessed at the magic nature of this little gourd from the South; had I received any inkling of its amazing properties, I should, for one year, have devoted my entire garden to the raising of gourds, and become the greatest gourd expert in the world. Because, if six seeds produced four varieties, twelve must have given me eight, and a hundred, no less than sixty-six. Multiply sixty-six by five, for the gourd contained at least five hundred seeds, and we get three hundred and thirty different gourds. But there are not three hundred and thirty gourds known to cultivation. Therefore it follows that, had I produced such a crop of new varieties, my name must have rung through gourd circles to the end of time.

GOURDS AND MAIZE,

LOPHOSPERMUM SCANDENS.

I may remark that the Indian corn in the picture is also grown by me. Green corn is a pleasant vegetable, and I surprise Americans who come to see me by giving them that familiar dish. Let them have but that, and ice, and a squash pie, and they ask no more —but to be allowed to talk about themselves and their noble country. This concession I freely and willingly grant. The advantage is all on my side. Of course the corn in my photograph is no longer green. Some we annually permit to ripen for next year's crop.

Upon a small garden-room gourds are rather clumsy, and I only have light annual things that leap aloft swiftly, and do not annoy the regular residents with their tendrils and other attentions. Ipomœa is first favourite, and grandiflora and other varieties of "Bona-Nox" are beautiful. I like also versicolor—a cheerful thing, that frets the dying green of summer with its scarlet and white blossoms, and only gives up with the first frost. I hear that amphicarpa monoica should be grown by everybody, and I know that thunbergia alata should be. This last, however, does better as a trailer indoors; and when you see fifty pots of it along the front of the conservatory stage, you will be pleased. Such a grateful spectacle puts a man into a good temper, when many better things may fail to do so. Humulus japonicus, the variegated hop, I much like and always grow; dolichos lablab I scorn, and he had hardly flowered with me before I banished him for ever. Cobæa scandens will often survive a winter here; but I care not very much for him, because he made trouble in my conservatory, and ramped there,

and thrust himself out of the windows in the roof and waved to passers-by, and behaved rudely. For the moment he is under a cloud with me; but I may grow him again some day. My favourite is lophospermum scandens, now classed with maurandya, I hear; though if I had arranged this botanical shuffle, I should have classed maurandya with him. Lophospermum is generally considered a cool house climber, and in the north it may be so; but here I grow her as an annual on my garden-room. Her habit is light and dainty; her deep, rosy, trumpet-shaped flowers stud the long branches and make harmony with the pleasant green of the leaves. My picture represents a single plant grown from seed that ripened in the open air last year. Lophospermum is at her best in mid-October. Maurandya I like also and have grown, but she is a much smaller thing, and not quite so good-hearted with me.

One might mention fifty other annuals and perennials much to be desired in connection with the sides of a garden-room; and I hope you have them, and enjoy them, and go on adding to the stock. Creepers and twiners are a noble family; also those many shrubs with a tendency to climb. Of these I have a few only in sequestrated nooks. Among them berberidopsis corallina flowered for the first time this year, and trachelospermum jasminoides did the same. This plant is better known as rhynchospermum among his intimates. He comes from Shanghai, but will flourish and shed light and sweetness against a sheltered wall in these parts. Holbœllia, stauntonia, and lardizabala

all do well in like positions. Stauntonia at least I can vouch for personally, because a magnificent specimen is known to me. This has covered the front of a lofty terrace, and is now climbing an elm tree as though to the manner born.

Cocculus I know not, but it has good friends; smilax aspera I dug up from his home in a southern wood, and nearly tore myself to pieces while so doing. He has a red-hot corner of my rockery, and I wait for spring to know if he is still there and will peep out when April calls. But it may be that he has perished. To see this plant abroad at the time of fruiting is good. The glory vine, or parrot's beak: clianthus puniceus, is, perhaps, a little over-rated. It prospers against a wall with me; but it is a poor thing compared to the noble clianthus Dampieri. That I grew once, and only once, in a warm, belladonna lily border outside a hothouse. It was one of the most beautiful things I ever produced, and much I mourned it when it passed away and left not a seed behind. This glory vine germinates but sparingly even in pots; though perhaps that is because the usual quality of seed is indifferent.

There remains lapageria among the highest class for open air, and a friend of mine beautifully flowers both the white and crimson varieties in a snug but shady corner. Napoleon's Bell, as it is called, comes from Chili, and apparently, like the rest of Chilians, can easily have too much sun. The best I have seen out-of-doors are inferior to well-grown, cool-house specimens.

Such plants as kerria, amelanchier, desmodium,

forsythia, eleagnus, hamamelis, halimodendron, rubus (including phœnicolasius, deliciosus, and nutkanus), pittosporums, olearias, and carpenteria, need no wall with me. Most of these flower well and grow steadily. The lovely callistemon receives neither shelter nor support. Of other precious things that I possess as small hopeful plants may be mentioned halesia tetraptera, the silver bell, or snowdrop tree; rhododendron racemosum; kalmia glauca; cercidiphyllum; eriobotrya; limonia trifoliata; parrotia; various eucalyptus; colletia; eucryphia; coriaria; abelia; stephanandra; prunus triloba; ribes speciosum, and corylopsis pauciflora.

Such glorious creatures as embothrium coccineum, styrax, punica, fremontia, grevillea, stuartia, cassia, cantua, crinodendron and other mighty princes among flowering shrubs, I possess also—mostly as promising infants.

Now in front of my garden-room stretch rounded beds. One lies on each side of the entrance, and each is built up in two steps. Upon the right are ranges of peat; upon the left spreads a rich loam. In the peat I have azalea mollis, with a range of colour from pale yellow to flaming scarlet. All these hues are warm, while those of the rhododendrons are cold. They must be kept widely apart. I caught a bed of rhododendrons in a line with the azaleas once, and was quite shaken and startled at the violence of the colour-contrast. But the azaleas are over before the rhododendrons reach their prime. Under my azaleas spring up bulbs of various muscari. The

AZALEA MOLLIS.

grape hyacinths glory in peat. Of these botryoides, white and blue, go beautifully together; azureum is first and fairest to my mind; moschatus is sweetest. The yellow moschatus was called Tibcadi of old, and fine roots fetched a guinea apiece in Holland. You can get one for eightpence now. The race received its name from the Turks. They first called it "muscari," because its scent resembled a sort of musk pastille with which they perfumed their abodes. Comosus, the tasselled hyacinth, is not beautiful but interesting. I picked him wild in France with botryoides. Parkinson says that "the whole stalk with the flowers upon it doth somewhat resemble a long Purse tassell, and thereupon divers Gentlewomen have so named it." That was a happy thought of the divers gentlewomen; but their descendants have no tassels to their purses to-day. Monstrosum is a variety —the familiar and delightful feathered hyacinth. This comes last, with a frizzle of pleasant amethystine flowers in late May. Conicum, called 'Heavenly blue,' is another much praised by those who know it.

With these hyacinths thrive camassia, gladiolus, and a few lilies. Apocynum, or dog's bane, did very well also, but I have eradicated[1] this fly-catcher as a thing not worth growing. In any case, Devonshire dogs don't care a button for him. The experiments upon these beds embrace a sickly gerbera Jamesoni, an orange tree or two, and camellias. The Transvaal daisy merely lingers, and, as an invalid, is not

[1] Quite a mistake. Plant apocynum in peat: give him a year's start, and dynamite won't eradicate him.

interesting; while of the orange trees and camellias I cannot yet speak with authority. But an orange tree cast out into my nursery, and allowed to do as it pleased there under a shady wall, astonished me this year. As a pot-plant my gardener muddled it; yet, in the open, it began to grow rapidly, and now, in October, is set with flower-buds. I shall encourage this specimen by giving it a very important position beside the garden-room; and the tasselled and feathered hyacinths will creep to its feet, and the azaleas will urge it to persist and get established.

Camellias, of course, prosper here, but everybody tells me the same story: that they don't bud up properly out of their pots in the open air. I cannot understand this, and am watching with interest to see what line they will take with me. The splendours of azalea pass after spring; but lily and gladiolus follow, though it is rather hot in summer for the former family. Longiflorum does the best of them here—of course renewed annually. Life is too short to potter about with all the stupid little bulbs this lily arranges after flowering. Around these beds I usually carry a cheerful annual to brighten things up after the azaleas have done. For this purpose a high-class lobelia does well, or sanvitalia procumbens. This little trailer much appreciates peat, and pleases nearly everybody with its masses of tiny, golden-rayed, and black-eyed flowers, like the most miniature of rudbeckias. But it has never caught Professor Nicholson's eye; indeed, I am often shocked to find some special favourite of mine has failed to earn the supreme

distinction of his asterisk. In the "Dictionary of Gardening" that star is applied to all plants "especially good or distinct." To deny this Order of Merit is a very delicate matter, and may be doing the most serious injustice to a plant. About sanvitalia I will not argue, but merely chronicle regret without prejudice. In other cases, however, I am ready to withstand the whole staff of Kew and weary everybody, from the curator to the least gardener's apprentice, with my importunities. Wrong has been done here and there; and it must be righted. Assemble, ye gardeners, in your legions! Listen to me! and if you have tears to shed, be prepared to shed them now! *For geranium Lancastriense has not got a star; and no more has michauxia campanuloides!* There can be no intrigue here; it is not a case for diplomacy, or patience, or backstairs influence. We must meet together in detachments and companies, with the insignia of our craft waving above us; and we must march over Kew Bridge like one man and woman, and lift up our voices in thunder, so that the pagoda and the palm-houses shake to their foundations. Then will the great ones tremble, and the director himself may be expected to rush forth with an asterisk in either hand; so that the geranium of Lancaster and André Michaux's exquisite bell-flower shall be crowned and uplifted to their proper eminence for ever.[1]

[1] Conversely, such a plant as mazus pumilio gets the star! No doubt the little, creeping wretch secured this honour by those underground operations at which it is such an adept.

Your gladiolus dotes on peat. I have lifted corms of Kelway's hybrids in mid-October that have measured well over ten inches in circumference. The spikes of rose and crimson, purple and cream, spring splendidly here, and brighten the verdant sides of my garden-room.

Upon the left hand of the entrance are tree pæonies, with colchicum lilies (szovitzianum) planted among them. This—loveliest of all the martagon folk—does heartily, and hangs out its lemon, purple-spotted bells until the place is fragrant with them; and my varieties of mouton pæony also attain to excellence.

In connection with these Japanese tree pæonies, one thinks of the little maples that come with them and make such notable decoration. A couple of dozen or so combined in pots will give you the loveliest effect you can desire; and since these may be got in perfection from the West country, together with every other rare and beautiful plant and shrub mentioned in this chapter, and many more not mentioned, I am compelled to write a name. If you want the latest, loveliest, and best of flowering treasures from Japan and China, you must seek them at the famous nurseries of Messrs. Gauntlett & Son, Redruth. Here shall be found a magnificent collection of the fairest things that grow; and it is worth correcting a fallacy in connection with these great gardens. People imagine that because a plant has been raised in Cornwall it must be delicate. The wildest nonsense is talked about our climate, and we are supposed to live in the moist heat of a sub-

tropical greenhouse. As a matter of fact, this is far from true, and — at Redruth, for instance — very stern winters are experienced. These Japanese things—acer, pæony, and a hundred of their betters —are perfectly hardy; and the fact that scores of Gauntlett's most enthusiastic clients live in the Midlands and northern England, is sufficient to prove it. If by chance you take your vacation in the West, and are a gardener, go to Redruth and feast your eyes on the rarest and most beautiful shrubs that you have probably ever seen in your life. The difference between west and north in this connection is merely one of position. At Kew, for instance, where the awful breath of London has to be fought in winter, the choice shrubs are mostly trained on walls. Probably they thrive in the same way elsewhere. With us they do no better, but may usually be grown without the wall. Xanthoceras sorbifolia, to take an example, is magnificent at Kew on a wall; here it is no finer, but does well without shelter.

CHAPTER V

THE WHITE ROCKERY

I AM frankly and absolutely for a formal garden. This may turn you away from me, but I hope not. Once and for all I declare against the thing called 'landscape-gardening,' and cleave to classic precedents. Note the high tone I take in this matter. With a house like mine there really is some excuse for seeking to ignore it, and developing a garden that shall be independent of architecture so dreadful; but no, I will be just; my garden shall shame my house by its correct proportions and proper adherence to what a garden ought to be. Not that this garden is classic—far from that; I wish it was. But it is a garden, no mere feeble deception. It is a small piece of ground enclosed by walls; and, concerning those walls, you are in no doubt for one moment. There is not the least attempt to imitate natural scenery. There are no winding walks, no boskages, no sylvan dells, no grottoes stuck with stones and stalactites. My garden is simply an artificial, but none the less beautiful, arrangement of all the best plants that I can contrive to collect.

Consider the word 'garden.' It develops by evolution from the Anglo-Saxon 'geard' and the Middle

English 'garth.' It means 'a yard.' It has rather less than nothing to do with wild nature, or any other sort of nature. It is a highly artificial contrivance within hard and fast boundaries. We speak of a zoological garden, a garden of pleasure, a garden of vegetables. To talk of a 'natural' or a 'wild' garden, is a contradiction in terms. You might as well talk of a natural 'zoo,' and do away with bars, and arrange bamboo brakes for the tigers, mountain-tops for the eagles, and an iceberg for the polar bears.

Pope and Addison began the 'natural' theory, or fell in with it as soon as others set the fashion. They were about as intimate with nature as my chimney-sweep is with the latest Russian fiction; but it happened to be the cant of the time, and they reflected their hour and preached the return to Nature—*du sein des boudoirs*. Remember that very fine jest against our landscape-gardening: "Rien n'est plus facile que de dessiner un parc anglais; on n'a qu'à enivrer son jardinier, et à suivre son trace." I scorn a park, or garden either, planned upon that groggy pattern. My paths are straight or circular, as the case requires: there is no meandering with me. You will perhaps answer sharply that one cannot meander in an acre, and that I am like the fox with his tail gone: I pretend to admire what I have no power to evade. Believe me, you are wrong. As I say elsewhere, if my garden were a thousand acres, it should sternly subscribe to form and design. The architect and the gardener, like "the walrus and the carpenter,"

should walk hand in hand; and I am very sure they would not weep, if I had the privilege to employ them upon a garden worthy of the name. Besides, you *can* meander in an acre. I have seen the most horrible tortuosities in half that space.

It is all very well for Addison to quote Horace and Virgil, and say that art is but the reflection of nature, and that natural things are more grand and august than any we may meet with amid the curiosities of art; but in the very midst of these platitudes he urges us to help and improve the natural embroidery of the meadows by small additions of art, and set off rows of hedges with trees and flowers. Landscape-gardening has produced a deal of fine writing, and been the death of the old severe instincts. In this place the result of these views about nature is, that nine gardens out of ten are smothered with trees, and become mere natural factories of leaf-mould and nothing more. The houses are worthy of these gardens. The trees thrust their elbows in at the windows; then people talk about rheumatism. Give me light and air in a garden — even before plants.

Upon this subject hear Mr. Reginald Blomfield, the world-famous architect, who is responsible for some of the most distinguished modern gardens in the United Kingdom. He is a hard hitter, I promise you, and speaks thus in his "Formal Garden of England"—a fascinating book that you ought not to be without. "The formal gardener is by his principles entitled to do what he likes with nature, but

the landscapist gets involved in all sorts of contradictions. He 'copies nature's graceful touch,' but under totally different conditions to the original; so far, therefore, from being loyal to nature, he is engaged in a perpetual struggle to prove her an ass."

Now this sound argument justifies me in planting yucca, agapanthus, and acacia, since I am a formal gardener, and my object is not to imitate nature, but to exhibit her productions in a place specially ordered for that purpose; but the disciples of Mr. Robinson have no right to set up bananas in their glades, or foreign foliage plants for summer bedding. Their avowed ambition and aim is to copy nature as closely as they can; and nature does not grow the flora of Africa with that of Europe, or mingle the bog plants of North America and her productions from the Himalayas. To be logical, every non-indigenous plant should be banished from these 'natural gardens.' Push the precept to its just conclusion, and you arrive at a piece of wild waste land, which is the most perfect natural garden anybody can aspire to—in other words, not a garden at all.

Three cheers for Mr. Blomfield! I go stoutly along with him until the very end of his book; and there—on page 235—I most reluctantly part company. His flower-list will not serve my purpose. It is three hundred years old, and full of scent and music and charm; but the gardens of our forefathers do not suffice us to-day. There is no objection to a plant having a botanical as well as a

familiar name; and I only find a gardener's catalogue to be a horrible thing when the names of plants are given incorrectly.[1] I glory in the writer's profound knowledge of what a garden should be, and I bow with admiration and respect before pictures of Badminton, Rycott, Wrest, Haddon, and other glorious formal gardens from the olden time; but, touching plants, we must move with the century if we are gardeners at all. The gillyflower is not forgot; Solomon's seal, Jacob's ladder, sweet-William, bergamot, love-in-a-mist, columbine, and a hundred other sweet and precious things that our great-grandmothers loved, are all honoured in my garden; but this is no reason why I should deny myself carpentaria californica, say, or the tiny daffodils from Spain, or a cluster of calorchortus, or the latest deep purple loveliness of a new hybrid syringa. I would have the architect in my garden, if I could—with his fine old leaden statues, stately vases, sundials, balustrades, and gazebos; but I would never let him be unkind to the gardener. The case is made for the jewels, not the jewels for the case.

I am led to these reflections as I walk up and down in front of my straight, stiff, and formal limestone rock-border. If you look with eyes unprejudiced you will find beauty here for twelve months out of the year. There is, in fact, never a day without flowers upon this border. But it does not make any pretence to imitate nature, save in one

[1] I saw Pendennis Veitchii in a sale catalogue only last week, but the plant was a pandanus.

particular. I like the relation of rock and soil to resemble that in which these plants grow at home. I like to arrange a place and food for their roots, such as those roots are accustomed to; and I endeavour to give this plant sunshine and that plant shade; this a dry spot, and that a damp one, because their likes or dislikes in these matters are known, and they will perish, or at least disappoint, if their needs are not considered. Indeed they do often enough refuse to live as it is. Between my ignorance and the Devonshire climate, many are doomed from their arrival. This rock-border is merely a theatre for the display of hundreds of little plants. Nothing could be more beautiful when the place is one brilliant sheet of flower-light in June; nothing could be less like nature's own ordinance, because here are assembled as many different races of plants as you will find races of men in an Eastern bazaar. From all parts of the world they come; from north, south, east, and west; from the Cape and Kamtchatka; from Mount Lebanon and the Rockies; from India, Japan, and Australia. I think there are but few 'gardener's plants' among them. With certain exceptions my company here are all recognised species. Some flourish; some languish; some perish untimely, do what I will to establish them.

By your leave we start at the west end, and I will spread the panorama before you. Bulbs begin it where in spring rise the snake's-head fritillaries and the snake's-head irises. They are scattered about over this part of the rock-work, and shoot up

where they please. Other irises also occur here, but these I reserve for future admiration. Then you will see a patch of dryas octopetala that I grew from seed. It loves limestone and creeps steadily forward. Small cyclamens, setaceous phloxes, œnothera pumila, and other things are swept away before it, because dryas will not do everywhere, and the road must be made smooth. In fruit and flower it is beautiful. Above, on a separate ledge, grow ixias. They ought to be dug up in winter, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of their foliage, which gets browned by the frost. The leaves spear in October, and a hard winter rather worries them. But the blossoms never seem any the worse. What a grand family this is, and what a pity that nurserymen's hybrids have quite taken the place of the old original forms. These I never see or hear of now; but their pictures may still be admired in Curtis's *Botanical Magazine* of a hundred years ago. No hybrid that I have grown can compare in beauty to the old plants. Think of grandiflora, falcata, gracillima aristata, corymbosa (though that's a lapeyrousia now), and amethystina. But perhaps these fine things were not as hardy as those we plant to-day. The green ixia certainly is better in a pot, though I have bloomed it upon my rock-border very well.

Below the ixias is a stretch where grows the yellow satin-flower, or sisyrinchium californicum; the blue one, S. Bermudiana; campanulas; and phlox "G. F. Wilson"—the best of the whole alpine group of phloxes, in my opinion. It is a beautiful, pure

lavender colour, a wonderful bloomer, and hardier than the type. You cannot have too much of this. Phlox stellaria also showers over the ledges here, and phlox canadensis is a good thing too in its straggly way; but, upon the whole, my slugs like it better than I do. Out of respect for their tastes, my garden resembles the Zoological Society's to some extent, for it is full of cages. They are, however, not placed here to prevent the plants from getting out, but to keep the slugs from getting in. These zinc collars are very ugly, but absolutely necessary on my rock-border. I have slain till I am sick of slaughter. I have used all the slug-killing prescriptions, and have found them all equally efficacious. I have such slug preserves that I can go out and bag a brace or a hundred brace at any moment. Only yesterday I surprised a snail that had chosen the comparative seclusion of daphne cneorum to lay a whole cargo of eggs. I counted the pearly things, and there were exactly seventy-four. These hermaphroditic horrors can all lay eggs. So can the slugs, I understand. Snails are simpler to catch, on the same principle that a man who has a house and is his own tenant must be easier to secure than one who merely flits about among hotels; but frankly, I am tired of catching them. I have destroyed legions; I have taken them with subtle snares and springes; in Touchstone's words, I have "made away, translated their life into death, their liberty into bondage; I have dealt with them by poison, bastinado, and steel; I have bandied with them in faction, o'er-run them with policy; killed

them a hundred and fifty ways." And yet they neither tremble nor depart. I understand the value of soot and bran and beer, lime and lime-water and orange-peel; I have applied slugicides in every variety that the advertisements offer; but the slugs persist. Mr. Robinson has a good remedy. He says that if limax agrestis be stabbed or cut through with a sharp-pointed knife at the shield, the creature dies immediately. This I know to be true; and I go further, and believe that if he be divided anywhere, he likewise dies; but some gardeners question it, and hold that to halve slugs is to double them—that, in fact, we 'increase by division,' according to the accepted horticultural phrase. There is a great deal of anger, doubt, and ignorance expended on the subject, and I have never yet heard a respectable theory of slugs other than my own. This, of course, sounds vain; but I advance my opinion with the utmost modesty and deference, make no scientific claims whatever, and am quite prepared to hear the idea cannot be sustained. I submit that during the earth's infancy as a life-bearing planet, Nature created slugs for her own purpose, and really found them both desirable and necessary. Before the time of gardens they probably had a part to play in the cosmic machinery, and were very pleasant companions: they flourished; they ate; and they were eaten, as we all are. I believe there exist fossil slugs; at any rate the slug and the snail both can point to a profound antiquity. But at last there came a time when Nature began to feel the slug was played out. With the pro-

gress of evolution and a gradual but steady improvement in terrestrial conditions, the need for slugs slowly waned and ultimately disappeared. Of course, I deal with geological periods of immense duration, and am not suggesting that the demand for slugs ceased suddenly. Cease it did, however, and there came a tragic moment when Nature said to the slug, "Go! I require you no more. You have done your work well, and I thank you, but henceforth I propose to proceed without you. Good-bye."

And the slug replied to Nature, "Not at all. I suited your convenience by coming. I shall consider my own before departing. This place suits me; the conditions suit me; there is a growing rage for the choicer alpines in temperate gardens; and they also suit me. I am not ready to go; I don't want to go; and, to make a long story short, I won't go."

Now that is where we stand. It is the sluggishness of the slug that is his strength. Nature and the slug are in the same relation to each other as man and the rabbit in Australia, or Frankenstein and the pathetic horror he created but could not control. What the end will be I can form no opinion. The slug problem, like the servant problem and the flying ship problem, remain to solve for those who follow us. One thing may be conceded to the slug. When he informs Nature that he is not ready to go, he tells the truth. To despatch him now is to cut him off in the very midnight of his sins. Many have I sent to their account with their mouths actually full of some precious thing that very likely cost five shillings.

And, finally, let us sweep away that sanguine nonsense about slug-proof plants. Show me your slug-proof specimens and suffer me to bring up a leash of my big fellows—striped like tigers—and we shall see. I will keep them on the chain without food for a week, and then slip them at something you value. Zinc alone stops them; this metal is highly obnoxious to slug or snail, and a collar of it affords the best protection to alpines that I have yet met with.[1]

Saxifraga rosularis, silene alpestris, and some clumps of saxifraga apiculata thrive at the spot below my ixias, while beneath them is another step sowed with grass—five feet long and a foot and a half deep. Here are tiny daffodils: minimus, juncifolius, calathinus, concolor, cyclamineus, nanus, and triandrus alba. Some do and some do not. N. calathinus I cannot prevail upon to

[1] An ancient writer doth thus discourse upon the subject of snails. It is a precious opinion and worthy to be recorded. "The snayle," says he, "hath but 3 senses, that is the touch, the smell, and the tast; he sees not; he hears not. The touch is principally in his hornes; the smell and taste in his mouth, in which he hath a little black toung not bigger than a hair, with which he frets herbes, bread, and other things." Sir Thomas Browne, on the contrary, credits your snail with sight, and thus he tunes the sonorous organ of his prose to this slimy subject. "That they have two eyes is the common opinion; but if they have two eyes, we may grant them to have no less than four, that is two in the larger extensions above, and two in the shorter and lesser horns below; and this number may be allowed in these inferior and ex-sanguineous animals, since we may observe the articulate and latticed eyes in flies, and nine in some spiders: and in the great phalangium spider of America, we plainly number eight." Elsewhere he declares that, "by the help of exquisite glasses we discover those black and atramentous spots or globules to be their eyes." Eyes or no eyes, the snail's "little black toung" is a fact; his rooted objection to the metal zinc is also a fact; and this last circumstance is more important from the point of view of minute alpines and delicate bulbs than any other.

THE WHITE ROCKERY.

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FLOWERS OVER ROCKS.

blossom. In the next ledge a blue-flowered syntheris and asperula nitida flourish with saxifraga aizoon, the little English mountain everlasting, antennaria dioica, and the least of the willows, the tiny salix reticulata. The edelweiss does well with me, but slugs adore this plant. It is easily grown from seed, and will prosper, I believe, anywhere on limestone. Dianthus neglectus next catches my eye with the rosy little willow herb, epilobium obcordatum from Sierra Nevada, and a plant of vaccinium Vitis-idæa. This evergreen whortleberry is common in Derbyshire, and I have good clumps from the Peak, but in our county of Devon it happens to be exceedingly rare. Only upon one tor in the heart of Dartmoor may it be found, and there its little snowy bells are shaken in spring and its scarlet fruits appear during August. Drabas and sedums occur next, and the front of the rockery here is draped with aubrietias of various colours, packed with echeverias and supported by heucheras, that would like to spread into one's path. My favourite at this spot is erodium Reichardi, a native of Majorca and a rock gem. It spreads a neat rosette of tiny leaves and lifts therefrom generous succession of dainty white blossoms. Erodium macradenum from the Pyrenees is also in good trim elsewhere. Its fern-like leaves and purple and white blossoms make a feature of any rock-work. Looked at through a lens, the veined blooms of erodiums are very lovely. Sometimes these plants will fade away and die after some tremendous outburst of bloom. Therefore you need reserves. The great erodium, manescavi, grows like a weed in my

garden and sows itself freely. Dwarf roses, dwarf bamboos, and dwarf lilies all occur in the next few yards of rock-border. Of roses some dainty small varieties of the little 'chinas' and 'fairies' are all beautiful on stone-work, and of lilies I have here concolor and coridion. The bamboos are going to make a lot of trouble presently. If I am still a gardener in 1907 the battle will have to begin. Of these pushing things I have the variegated bambusa Fortunei, pygmea, disticha, and Veitchii—a bamboo that dies from the edge of the leaf inward. This circumstance gives the clump a distinctive appearance during winter. I have also aurundinaria auricoma, a golden grass, and stipa, the feather grass, with other grasses here and there. My big encrusted saxifrages had a blooming fit this summer, and many noble rosettes of pyramidalis have vanished. They hung out a cloud of snowy, rosy-spotted flowers in June. Several of my clumps of encrusted saxifrages have survived their labels, but I can still distinguish squarrosa and cochlearis minor — little beauties both — Churchilli and nepalensis. A good few others will be anonymous until they flower—and perhaps afterwards. I brought one from the mountain rocks of Portofino; and a friend conveyed me others from Austria. They came with primula marginata — loveliest of alpine primroses.

Speaking of primulas, I was invited to go on a motor-car expedition when last in the South. Such a pleasure there one associates with rather giddy pursuits — with Monte Carlo and entertainments and

frivolity in some shape. But that contemplated expedition had a higher and nobler aim. We were to clamber into the mountains north of Mentone in order to find primula Allionii. This plant only grows in the Gorge Sauvage of the Vallée de Caïros, and near Entracque in Piedmont. Such a thing accomplished would have gone far actually to justify motor-cars; but our expedition failed. Local botanists held it too early for this rarest of primulas, and told us that she would still be hiding under the snow.

Saxifraga longifolia is the grandest of the encrusted group. Like the rest of the family, they prefer to hang almost perpendicularly. The mossy saxifrages make beautiful clumps upon this border and flower very abundantly with white, pale yellow, pink, and deep crimson blooms. Dwarf campanulas abide beside them, and the larger ones thrive above and below in the stones. Along the top of this part of the rockery occur separate pleasant plants on a narrow, sunny, and well-drained shelf. I have here albuca nelsoni, phygelius capensis, leontice altaica, tulips, korolkowia or fritillaria Sewerzowi, aristea eckloni, from Natal (not happy), and tulbaghia alliacea, another African.

Sometimes, after an extraordinary winter, there are accidents in this terrace, and we mourn a friend and find a dwelling-place to be let; but it does not often happen. I had also gelasine azurea and tricyrtis of different sorts on this ledge; but gelasine was not only fleeting, like most irids, but insignificant, so he had to go, and tricyrtis, after blossoming for two

autumns, took himself off. These Japanese toad-lilies are interesting and make splendid pot plants, but their late blooming is against them in the open garden. Next I note the dwarf fuchsia—gracilis; hacquetia, or dondia epipactis; various veronicas and thymes in scented pillows; arenaria montana and A. purpurescens; potentilla alchemilloides; P. nitida (the best of all), and convolvulus mauritanicus —struggling tooth and nail with Lady Larpent's plumbago—a most unladylike plant, by the way. I shall have to separate these two. They fight like demons, and the flower-clusters of plumbago and wide purple bells of bindweed sprawl inextricably tangled and twined together in autumn. They will both have to be planted upon another piece of rock-work, there to wage war on a larger scale. Caulophyllum, with bronzy foliage and little chocolate blooms, and arnica next occur, while rock-roses—yellow, rose, red, orange, and white—follow them. My white rock-rose, with a golden eye and hoary foliage, is a true species and one of the rarest of British plants. I am privileged to have it growing wild within a walk of my garden; and, as if this was not enough good fortune, I also know the home of aster linosyris, or goldilocks—a plant as rare as the other, if not so beautiful. The purple gromwell is a third distinguished neighbour of mine. These three, the helianthemum, the aster, and the lithospermum, are all happily settled on my rockery. If you frown, I answer that only a specimen or two of each was taken, and no harm done, for the secret of their homes is pretty safe. A

HELIANTHEMUM POLIFOLIUM AND SAXIFRAGA AIZOON.

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FUCHSIA PROCUMBENS.

few high botanic spirits know where they live; and, in the case of some other equally rare British plants, the habitat is kept by a sort of inner circle of specialists—good men and true—who would hold it a sin against science to publish these haunts of choice treasures. Mine was the privilege to rediscover a tiny hare's ear, buplerum aristatum, after it had been lost to our local botany for nearly fifty years. This little annual suddenly spread his minute loveliness before me, where I hunted for certain plants of the clover kind. I could not believe my eyes; I supposed that I must be in some botanical dream, and that this was the spirit of buplerum come to brighten an unconscious hour. But I was awake; no possibility of doubt existed. Remembering the parallel case of a great meeting, I raised my hat and said, "Buplerum aristatum, I presume!" Then I selected four specimens and drew them out of the earth and went upon my way. Every eye appeared to read my secret and people regarded me with suspicion. Doubtless they thought my joy was simulated, or that my keeper had lost me.

The genial editor of the "London Catalogue of British Plants" honoured buplerum by accepting specimens of it, and some day I hope to have the pleasure of taking him to see it in its home. But he must hasten, or bricks and mortar will bury that minute hare's ear for ever.

Another native plant, the bastard balm, surprises botanists here and is very well worthy of its place; while at its feet grows modiola ger-

anioides—a pleasant little thing with lively carmine blossoms.

Saxifraga sarmentosa prospers upon the rock-border and spreads its threads and infant plants without fear. It also blooms abundantly. A clubbed veronica next appears and more campanulas; then tropæolum polyphyllum scatters glaucous green foliage and yellow blossoms in sprays and showers, and calandrinia umbellata makes a brilliant contrast. My wife says that this calandrinia is magenta; but I deny it. My idea of magenta is quite different. If I admitted the charge, calandrinia would have to pack up and be off, because I have faithfully promised that magenta shall not be permitted anywhere in the garden. Statice minuta—a pretty atom—comes next, with herniera glabra, a yellow lithospermum whose name I forget, phyteuma obiculare, a fine primula frondosa, sheltered behind a stone, othonnopsis cheirifolia, convolvulus althæoides, and fuchsia procumbens. This last is a particular favourite of mine, and his flowing habit and wonderful scarlet fruit, as big as damsons, make me forgive the flower. Note what quaint decoration this plant makes in a vase. His bloom must be confessed a thought loud. He has lavender-coloured anthers, crimson stamens, a yellow body, and green and purple petals. He comes from New Zealand, which may excuse this aboriginal arrangement of colour; but the gardener who possesses him is proud of him, while the gardener who does not, instantly prepares to rectify the omission. Of other things here I note thalictrum alpinus, erinus, spiræa fili-

pendula, berberis dulcis nana, and œnothera speciosa. This last has to be watched sharply. He is good, but, like his neighbour, convolvulus althæoides, a great subterranean traveller. There are other far nobler œnotheras than this, however, and these occur elsewhere. Of bulbs and corms[1] I speak presently. They are scattered everywhere in this rock-border, and they come up at all times—from the early days of chionodoxa and snowdrop, to the last blooms of tigridia, cypella Herberti, colchicum and autumn crocus, and the first of iris alata and winter crocus.

One way of treating gladiolus I may mention here. I closely plant the 'bride,' blandus, and other small and lovely sorts in dozens, and they spring up and break the lines of the stones, and shake out little sheaves of white, or rose, or peach-blossom colour above the carpets of the smaller plants. A grand old gardener taught me to do this, as well as many, many other things. Such enthusiasm as belonged to him I never met in any calling. He is the greatest horticulturist that I have known. His Indian garden must have been a vision of glory. He has an eye for a rose that is simply a revelation to ordinary people, and he can make anything and everything grow. I think nothing baffles him; and his hybrid begonias and daffodils were a dream of beauty. Let me celebrate with all due honour, ceremony,

[1] *Bulbs and corms.* But I see ixia has pushed into this chapter. Just what one might expect of him. He and sparaxis always make a race for it, and many a frost-pinch they get for their pains.

and affection the name of William Ainslie upon this page. I wish I could find a new, fragrant, and lovely plant worthy to embalm his memory for ever. Carnations, dahlias, and, I believe, roses have been named after him; but what is that? Such a rare spirit should have a genus all to himself.

GLADIOLUS TRIMACULATUS AND CONVOLVULUS ALTHÆOIDES.

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GLADIOLUS ROSEUS.

CHAPTER VI

THE WHITE ROCKERY (*continued*)

GARDENERS have been a subject very common in literature, and one might easily write many new things about them, even at this late date. Here they occur in great abundance; we have every description of gardener; and the average of excellence is high. For the lowest, most despicable class one must seek in the suburbs of cities. In those places unskilled labourers will trample and destroy for you at three shillings and sixpence a day. They call themselves jobbing gardeners. If energetic as well as ignorant, they will earn their money by wholesale ruin and malpractice; if merely lazy vagabonds, as is more often the case, they will spend most of their time at the kitchen door, and do little harm except to the minds of your serving-maidens. I have escaped beyond the dreadful radius of the jobbers, into a county where gardeners may be ignorant, but they are honest. Here we are not afraid of work, and even the humblest among us is a real gardener, not a loafing sham, who has neither probity nor knowledge nor self-respect to justify his existence. Of course, human nature persists, and our gardeners have their fads and fancies, their negligences and

ignorances; but nobody is perfect. Our men usually develop at least one line of excellence, and endeavour to establish a reputation for special skill in some branch of their business. They do not always succeed, but they try. Gardeners must not be expected to run like clocks. A machine, or a season, does its duty, and cares not for our expressions of satisfaction or displeasure. It is no matter of concern to an express train whether your journey has been successful or the reverse; a wet summer is oblivious of your hard words and cutting speeches concerning it; but gardeners do not work in this way. Indifference demoralises them; it is as bad for them as too much praise. Give them constant attention and reveal a personal knowledge of their business if you can; then you will perhaps get a good gardener. My gardener and I make many mistakes; and sometimes he corrects me; and sometimes I correct him. I trust to authority; he stands for experience. But authority is, after all, only somebody else's experience. The great gardening books are very seldom mistaken. It is in the horticultural columns of certain daily newspapers that we meet with dangerous advice and heretical opinions.

I am privileged to know a gardener who sat up all night to catch a slug. He is an orchid expert, and a rare good man all round. The slug arrived upon his orchid at 3.30 A.M. during a coldish morning in February; and the execution was not delayed. Now that is gardening! Conversely, I met a man recently whose master asked me to walk round the garden

with him and encourage him. But encouragement was the last thing that gardener needed. He appeared to me to be a most flamboyant and boastful person. His experience was clearly limited; his knowledge almost elementary. Instead of encouraging him, I gently indicated various unsatisfactory matters, and his brow grew clouded. He was unaccustomed to anything but admiration, and he desired nothing else. I said, "It's so important for us to read the text-books. There's nothing like steady reading and study to help practice. What works have you got?"

"None," he said. "I don't want no books. It's all here!"

So saying, he tapped his great, stupid head.

Now a man of that mean stamp freezes me instantly. I ceased to care for his garden. I refused to look at some obvious geraniums which he prided himself upon, turned coldly from him, and shuddered at a horrible bed of bad mixed verbenas. It is all very well to possess the whole art and practice of gardening in our heads; but we must arrange outlets. That gardener's duty was to let his mass of information exude like balm upon the garden of his master. Instead of which there was no sign of it anywhere. He kept it corked up and screwed in. Had he even suffered so much to escape as might have served to fill a "Beginner's Guide," one had forgiven him. A time will come when that miserable sham will be detected denying his immense knowledge to turnips, parsnips, or some radical matter of that

kind. Then he must be cast out; and when they come for his character, his employer will say, "Yes—oh yes, Smithers—a great man Smithers—he has it *all* in his head—but unfortunately will keep it there."

Gardeners are fond of teaching, yet very few care to learn. This trait, of course, is universal. If you find a gardener who listens, and asks questions, and seems not to know all you are telling him already, endeavour to secure that man for your own. The attitude of gardeners toward my white rockery is instructive. Real gardeners are interested; they show me how I can improve it; they doubt whether the general angle is all that it should be. If they see a plant that is new to them, they admit it quite freely and are pleased; they ask intelligent questions about the native homes of the alpines and how Cape bulbs survive English winters, and what tempts a Zambesi gladiolus to flower in the open air when I failed to make it do so under glass. They will also admire and find beauty in the general scheme, and even congratulate me and say they feel the better for seeing what my gardener and I have done. This is all very improving and comforting; but little, peddling gardeners, on the other hand, fly past the things they know not of and fasten upon some flower or shrub they happen to possess themselves. They anchor beside this, and after they have exhausted the trifling theme and casually mentioned that they possess better specimens in their own two-penny-half-penny gardens, they are surprised to find how the

GLADIOLI AND OTHER FLOWERS.

time is getting on, and away they go, having purposely seen nothing.[1]

To return to my white rockery; I come now to a very favourite family of little plants: the true geraniums. Of these, six cannot be dispensed with, and I give them in my order of merit. But, of course, you may place them differently. I think geranium ibericum is the most exquisite. Its glorious purple is rather like a salpiglossis, but far richer and daintier. Geranium Lancastriense comes next in my esteem. It is a form of sanguineum, and has the same habit, but possesses a much more beautiful flower. Lancastriense is palest, purest rose, lined delicately with a deeper shade of the same colour. It blooms from May until November here. Geranium argenteum generally stands first in this list with most people. I put it third. It is lovely enough, and its silver foliage has great distinction. In bloom it is much like the Lancaster geranium, but the veining lies on a pale ground that is of much inferior colour to my mind, and even tends toward magenta. The bloom of cinereum is very similar. Both I find a little tender. Next I like that giant, armenum, the Armenian geranium. He stands three feet high, and his deep red-purple petals and black eye are very splendid. Here again the word "magenta" is sometimes murmured, but I do not hear it. The white form of geranium sanguineum is fifth on my list; and sixth I put geranium Endressi, a clear, bright, rose-coloured bloomer

[1] Note that in a garden, as elsewhere, dread to admit ignorance is of ignorance the most glaring sign.

of free habit and pleasant countenance. I possess also pratense, purple-blue and white; and phæum, a dusky introduction, said to be wild in the North. Its reflexed chocolate blooms are most distinctive and not generally popular. The common sanguineum, striatum (a naturalised plant), and macrorhizon I also grow. The last is not attractive to me, though some people think well of him. I try to drive him away, but he won't go. He dodges about behind stones and then comes peeping out again. I give him away in bundles to all who admire him, and say with each root, "The last!" But spring returns, and macrorhizon struggles out from some deep hole in the rockery to salute the cuckoo with the best that he can do. Lastly, I have that fine old geranium, angulatum. At least, if it be not that, I know not which it is—unless, perhaps, nodosum.

So much for the crane's-bills. I know but these personally. There are, however, others well worth having, and perhaps better than these.

A mass of the lovely convolvulus cneorum next greets me. Its silky, silvery foliage is always a delight; its pale bloom brightens summer. The plant has an uplifted place to itself, and behind it a sheaf of coloured gladiolus springs. Not far off is another convolvulus with hoary leaves and a pale blossom—the little lineatus. The pretty frankenia lævis comes next, and then cyananthus lobatus. This is a source of trouble to me. Twice I have renewed it, and once a kindly friend, who has a noble garden in Surrey, made me the handsome gift of this plant.

It does amiably, shakes out its exquisite purple bells once, then with winter perishes. One cannot go on renewing choice things every year. That way the workhouse lies. What is the secret of cyananthus? I wish I knew, for there is no more beautiful little plant on a rockery. Why does it throw up the sponge so easily with me? Artimesia argentea does well, and its hoary foliage and yellow blossom is pleasant sight. It smells like a grocer's shop, curiously enough. Artimesia lanata, with masses of corn-coloured inflorescence, though handsomer, is not quite so strong. It suffers terribly from the wet, and seems, with its dense, silky clumps of foliage, to find immense difficulty in getting dry again after a drenching. All these woolly things are the same. Androsaces must be hung flat, or their rosettes and cushions will perish during a wet winter; and another essential treasure, the delicious, rosy potentilla nitida, soon comes to grief unless protected with a bit of glass when autumn falls. Androsaces, by the way, do not all prosper with me, and I have failed to please several among them. A dry-built wall, with good soil and bits of red sandstone packed between the stones, is the place for them. More small veronicas come next—pinguifolia; the beautiful deep blue satureioides; the large pale Lyall's, and others. V. repens spreads over some crocus clumps—then linum arboreum's glaucous foliage and grand yellow blooms rise, and we reach a tract of little various bulbs to be mentioned anon. Aquilegia glandulosa jacunda has a niche to herself—as well she may have with such a name;

globularia cordifolia prospers in the next compartment, and globularia nana, the loveliest mite that ever gladdened a rockery, has left the Pyrenees to keep its kinsman company. Gazania nivea is overrated in my judgment, but it blossoms abundantly here, and seems very nearly if not quite as hardy as splendens. A white cistus rises at the back of this rock-border. It grows at a great rate and flowers freely. Here, too, the dwarf irises occur—in shades of grey, purple, and yellow. Pumila loves a ledge in a rock-garden, and often blows with me in autumn as well as spring. Statice incana thrives close by, and various things sprawl together round the throne of geranium armenum. Malvastrum lateritum will have to go; but I admire his brick-red blooms. A neat eryngium also lives here. It is as bright as amethystinum, but smaller in all its parts. I dug it up in the wilds outside the town of Algiers. There, as a weed, it occurred in a resting stage about the edge of vineyards. Great cerinthes prospered with it, and heaths, and many sorts of orchis and ophrys folk, were of that company. Ophrys is not easy to grow in pots; mine sulked for a year, which was not surprising, as I dug the poor atoms up while they were flowering.

An Arab helped me to get the eryngium and other good things. He was a cheerful, genial soul, and had just married a wife, who lived with him in rather a shabby hut among the hills. It was surrounded by agaves and opuntias, and shadowed by a fig tree. Oranges and a Japan quince grew at the door; a vast

gulf yawned beneath; and far below their mountain home one saw the twinkle of a river. This man's wife was making a basket of grass. She had just completed it, and I secured it for a franc to hold my plants. The Arab introduced her with some formality, and I told him that he had done well to marry her, and that she was "une très jolie femme." Herein I exaggerated a little, but he appeared to be exceedingly pleased, and so did she. One may speak with this familiar impertinence to the mongrel Arabs about the neighbourhood of Algiers. They like it; they think the better of you for it; but if you attempted thus to discuss their wives with the nobler desert folk—with Bedouins or Kabyles—there is little doubt that the consequences would be exceedingly unpleasant for you.

I only grow one or two annuals on my white rockery, and these no such place should be without. Ionopsidium acaule is the neatest, trimmest, brightest and pluckiest little lavender-eyed mite to be seen in any garden anywhere. There is a cheerful happiness in the very look of this flower. It loves the sun, seeds itself, and wins general admiration. Now, during December, it is flowering away as though we were in July. Everybody falls in love with it; but nothing spoils it. From France I secured the white variety, which is also perfect. Of other creatures that require annual treatment I can only think of mesembryanthemum caulescens and grammanthes gentianoides. The first perishes out of doors in our winters. Therefore I take cuttings in October and plant vigorous-rooted

pieces here and there at the return of spring. It grows swiftly, and makes a very distinctive effect, but, unlike the big and coarse M. edule, does not flower out of doors. I had an enormous mat of this Hottentot fig, but grew tired of it, and turned on it, and killed it. I used to grow two others as annuals: the ice plant and tricolorum, but have abandoned them. Another thing grown from cuttings, and planted here and there for its very beautiful and late bloom, is pelargonium echinatum—the thorny geranium. This handsome pot plant, with its white, scarlet-splashed blossom, comes as a noble visitor among the residents of the rockery. The weather decides him as to flowering, and I take cuttings for next year when October returns.

Grammanthes is a delightful dwarf annual, and its little sparkling masses of yellow and orange make splendid colour, like fire, on a hot rockery in July.

Achillea tormentosa's golden bloom and the little lavender scabious pterocephela hide the front of my rock-work here with their flowers and beautiful foliage; then occurs a space where I grow calochortus,[1] and spread portulaca over this sandy region to follow these star tulips and Mariposa lilies. White-flowered thymus and more rock-roses dwell in front of my androsaces. Then occur patches of various sedums. They fight it out together, and the strong slay the

[1] *Calochortus.* By the way, what are your views on the subject of Latin plurals? Do you talk of calochorti and gladioli? If so, you must logically talk of "croci" also; and then people will refuse to know you. Do as I do, and shirk the plural words altogether.

weak, and the slugs help them. There must be a great deal of difference to the slug palate in the flavour of sedums. Some prosper untouched; others are browsed down to the last green atom. I am unfortunately not botanist enough to grasp and understand all the distinctions between sedums and sempervivums, cotyledons and echeverias. What is far worse, I don't care. Other succulents interest me much more than these. Once I had fifty, and I plunged their pots into a heap of sand during the summer, and pretended that it was the desert. In the midst of my desert rose an oasis of six phœnix palms one foot high. These were grown by me from Biskra date-stones. The desert disappeared early in October as a rule. Now it has disappeared altogether; because people laughed at it, and we gardeners are so horribly sensitive. My phylocactus group was only turned out upon the Sahara after flowering. Gasterias, haworthias, and some aloes bloom in winter; the stapelias during summer.

Nature came to most extraordinary grief with my stapelia grandiflora. It opened a sinister, starfish-shaped blossom—hairy, and of the colour of chocolate. The thing was lovely, but its odour a little harassing. People fled before my carrion flower, and marvelled how I could encourage it or be proud of it. But tastes differ: certain mother blue-bottles delighted in the blossom, and, having no botany, thought stapelia was something quite different. They buzzed there in appreciative crowds, and one laid her eggs in the very heart of the flower, so that the infant larvæ should have simple, nourishing food at hand when they came

to require it. But, as a home for the young of the blue-bottle, stapelia is worse than useless. That family was merely hatched to perish, and its members wriggled for a time, then passed uneventfully away. Perhaps it would have been kind to look after them; but I had no leisure. There is a good deal of scientific interest in this fact. Nature never jests, or one might suspect a rather stupid practical joke here. Do stapelias similarly delude the flies in their own country of South Africa? Or has evolution taught them better? Was it simply a case of the ignorance of British blue-bottles? Or was it some unusual fool of a blue-bottle who lacked the customary sound intelligence of her class? Let science reply to these questions. The useful blue-bottle likewise haunts my dragon arums, where they raise black-purple, evil-smelling heads above their speckled foliage in a corner. But I know not if they regard those plants also as possible refreshment for their young.

Cereus is the shyest bloomer among my cactus folk. Under glass I have flowered various mammillaria and opuntias—notably O. microdasys—a lovely yellow blossom. But cereus is stubborn, and pilocereus is wanting.

Let me mention the well-loved name of Miss Frances Mary Peard in this connection. By happiest chance that famous writer was at Bordighera on the occasion of my visit, and thus it happened, thanks to her familiarity with Italian, that I was able to visit a remarkable nursery there and bargain elaborately concerning succulents without the matter becoming too one-sided.

My special longing was this pilocereus, the old-man cactus, with his head of venerable silver hair; but he is never cheap anywhere—not even in Italy—and I had to go content with lesser celebrities. Opuntia tunicata is, upon the whole, my favourite of all these prickly people. Its ferocious ivory-white thorns give it a very handsome appearance, and in the southern gardens it attains to a remarkable size. Its flower I know not. To return to the afflicted sedums—my favourites, if I have any, are pulchellum—an old but rare beauty, with pink flowers and lovely foliage—Kamtschaticum, Middendorff's, and Stahlii. The last has yellow flowers, and I doubt its hardiness, but each leaf will make a new plant. The huge sedum spectabile is brown with honey-bees in late autumn.

Some large clumps of mossy saxifrages next appear, and in the ledges beneath them hang veronicas and peep cyclamens, while above are campanula garganica and C. Waldsteiniana. Next occurs a plant I think not common in England—the shrubby anthyllis Barba-Jovis,[1] that grows on sun-scorched cliff-faces of the Mediterranean in Provence. Thence I brought it, and so far the plant has prospered. It has pale lemon flowers and a neat habit of silver leaves. Here also is astragalus monspessulanus—a thing far finer and of a pleasanter form than the great straggly astragalus alopecuriodes, which is praised in high places, but which I grew with dismay, and would banish back to Siberia whence it came. Near at hand grows astragalus hypoglottis alba, and then passing that rather

[1] *A. Barba-Jovis.* There is a fine specimen on a wall at Kew.

overrated plant, spigelia Marylandica, I come to the little king of this corner, rhododendron hirsutum. He has a pocket of peat and prospers amazingly alongside various bulbs and some plants of daphne cneorum. These bloom and shed extraordinary fragrance once a year; but they ought to do so twice. It is rather too warm for them here, and I contemplate moving them to cooler quarters. Next occur genista humifusa, citysus schipkæensis, from the Shipka Pass, and vancouveria—a lovely little gem with foliage somewhat like epimedium, and dainty white flowers on tall stems. Aphyllanthes[1] monspeliensis follows. This last-named plant is perhaps the most interesting in my garden. Upon the ends of its unbranched, rush-like stems occur pure, pale blue blossoms with six petals. Here would seem to be an actual link between juncus and the lily, for aphyllanthes possesses the characteristics of both; but botanists hold that it belongs properly to neither family. It is unique, and there is but this one species known. Its nearest kin may be sought among boryas, alanias, and laxmannias in Australia by those who have leisure and inclination to do so. I notice a little coldness displayed towards aphyllanthes. Botanists are puzzled by it. They consider it difficult to explain or account for its presence in Europe without a passport. This is ungenerous. If the distinguished creature's appearance in France is not easy to understand, so much the more credit to it for coming. Who knows what immense difficulties

[1] *Aphyllanthes.* I found the plant pretty generously distributed in the fir woods between Cannes and Grasse.

RHODODENDRON HIRSUTUM.

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DAPHNE CNEORUM.

it may have surmounted by the way? "And therefore as a stranger give it welcome." This hardy and courageous little traveller does exceedingly well with me.

Encrusted saxifrages occur again here with acantholimon and mentha requiena. The last goes and comes curiously. This year I have large fragrant mats of it in one place. Next year they will develop in another. After flowering and producing absolutely the tiniest blossom in my garden, the seeds ripen and become scattered. Then they germinate and make new mats, while the old plants gradually perish with the frosts. Leptinella or cotula—I know not which it should be called—is another dwarf with fragrant foliage; but this, like the acænas, must be watched and kept in bounds. On one side of a row of steps I have a great border of alyssum. The seed-case of alyssum is worth preserving. You will find it consist of numberless tiny discs of pearl, like lunaria, or honesty, but far smaller and daintier. Anemones and a dwarf cydonia with deep crimson blossoms come next; then follow zauschneria procumbens and cerastium tomentosum matted together. One blooms in spring, the Californian fuchsia's fiery blossoms appear in late autumn. Magnolia stellata does well in a clump above a little tank in which that grand American nymphæa, "James Brydon," lives surrounded by small American ferns and iris cristata. Gazania splendens tumbles about later on in the year, and hard by, a very great favourite of mine, œnothera eximium from Upper California, opens its enormous and fragrant blossoms at the

sweet time of summer twilights. This queen of evening primroses has sugar-sweet sap and pure silvery petals that turn pink before perishing—a transformation that also overtakes the dandelion-leaved œnothera of Chili, which is a thing only less fine than eximium. I have also that splendid yellow œnothera, macrocarpa from the United States, and the tiny pumila, least of the family so far as I know. The common evening primrose is never quite absent—it seeds about in corners; but I have lost rosea and others.

A clump of crinums crown this rocky corner and, beside them, desmodium penduliflora springs without support and drips every way in a lovely shower, like a fountain of purple wine in October. Among minor treasures in this corner are saxifraga retundifolia from Ober Ammergau, linum monogynum from New Zealand, dierama from South Africa, and botrychium lunaria, the moonwort,[1] which I dug up on 'Sir William' Hill in the Derbyshire Peak. This uncommon fern is a tiny kinsman of osmunda. It occurs in Devon, but I have not chanced to find it here.

Dierama, or sparaxis pulcherrima, defies me. I hear that the best way with this plant is to keep him potted in a cool house until he is full of strong and vigorous growth, then turn him out. I shall try this prescription upon him. That neat little white-berried shrub,

[1] *The Moonwort.* "Moonwort (they absurdly say) will open locks and unshoe such horses as tread on it." Thus remarks the ridiculous, entertaining Culpeper. But he attributes properties to the plant quite as comical as these.

MAGNOLIA STELLATA.

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OENOTHERA EXIMIUM.

hymenanthera, follows, and next a draba and ferns appear, with azalea amœna, epimedium alpinum—a lovely thing in leaf and flower—and primula denticulata. Shade gives these plants their opportunity. Near at hand is the little rubus arcticus[1]—a cheerful mite and the tiniest of all his huge family. He blooms freely, but never sets his delicious amber berries with me.

With the arctic bramble I hope to associate another very small congener, rubus Chamæmorus, the cloudberry; but as yet this has escaped me. Next appear the lovely little erythræa pulchella and arctostaphylos Uva-ursi, the bearberry. Weigelia, or diervilla nana, grows here also with a native, thalictrum minus; then follow helianthus mollis and stenactis. Lastly buphthalmum salicifolium bows me out of my rock-border with his solitary yellow flowers.

Before proceeding to the bulbs, tubers, and corms which are scattered here, you will need rest, and so shall I. Of course, what I have showed you is very irregular and casual. But the glory of this little rock-border on a day in June; the sprays and sheets of colour; the single dazzling splashes of flowers; the pillows of them; the comet-like tails and trails of them; the explosions of pure splendour; the rose

[1] *Rubus Arcticus.* I honour this atom specially because it brought pleasure to Linnæus. He both figured and described it with loving care in his "Flora Lapponica"—out of gratitude, as he himself declares, because, upon his Lapland journeys, the wine made from these little raspberries often brought him refreshment when thirsty and weary. In Sweden a syrup, a jelly, and a beverage are all manufactured from rubus arcticus, so that, as you go north, he waxes into a personality.

and the snow; the purple and gold; the blue and orange; the scarlet and cream; the greys and silvers basking on scorching stones; the forms; the swaying movement of countless petals and stalks; the dance of the heat at noon and the savour of earth and flowers when my white rockery gets an evening bath —these things, of which only a fraction can be uttered, make up what is a restful toy to me. All was planted with my own hands; and that is not the least part of the pleasure of it.

CHAPTER VII

THE WHITE ROCKERY (*continued*)

GOETHE has said that the intentions of Nature are invariably good; that her purposes are noble and amiable; that, in fact, she means well. I go further than this, and dare assert that if one soars above the egotistical pettiness incidental to humanity, we shall find how Nature not only means, but actually does well. For, if you examine the objections to Nature, they prove invariably to be based on a human standard of good or evil, and we arrive at a mere anthropocentric judgment inspired solely by regard for our noble selves. In the case of generous and large-hearted people, the race is their first thought; but an average man or woman does not even consider the race, and is merely concerned with the paltry family circle to which he or she belongs; while, to sink still lower, there are a craven sort of spirits amongst us who reduce every interest to the bald and unblushing dimension of No. 1. All, however, be their outlook large or narrow, limit it to the race. Yet Nature might be expected to feel less sympathy with us than with any of her creatures, because the only unreasonable animal she has created happens to be the one with reason. What a shock and source of irritation

this must have proved to her! As an artist myself I can condole in the matter; for we have all been through it. Our ideas are so much grander than their embodiments, whether we compose, paint pictures, write books, or build worlds. No doubt, when first the great thought came, and she pictured the mammal developing into a conscious being, dear Nature felt her heart leap within her bosom. It *was* a big idea, but like many another grand conception, broke down comparatively under the technical difficulties of execution. We are an obvious disappointment, yet in many respects a splendid failure. She must try again; and she will very likely succeed next time. What she should attempt is a being with a more rational bent of mind, more patience, and a better logical understanding of her own fundamental principles than man has ever attained. We may be fair material to work upon; or she may prefer to let us go and return herself to the original starting-place (if she has not lost it) and try again. But my own opinion is that, let her only bear with us for a few more æons, while evolution does its perfect work, and she will be surprised and pleased. Failing this course, in Nature's place, I should turn my attention to another Order, give the deep sea a chance, and develop a consciousness of existence in the marine crustacea. A lobster with a mind might put his intellect to better purpose than we do. Besides, monopoly is always bad. It is time that the mammals be taught that they are not everybody.

Nature cannot, of course, please all of us, though, such is my love for her, that I believe she would gladly do so if it was within her power. Human life grows more complex with every century; but the laws of life, as she has laid them down, know no change. Interests are now so varied, competition is so keen, conditions are become so sophisticated, that Nature can only satisfy a section of the community at a time. Take an instance of the sort of problem that faces her at every turn.

Once I grew an apricot tree upon a wall. Over the wall was the garden of my friend Atkinson, and he devoted much of his attention to the earliest of early potatoes. The time was an hour before midnight, and Nature, tripping that way with queenly loveliness, stayed her silver feet for a moment to note the progress of things. Stars were in her hair; a breath as of a moonlit cloud hung about her beautiful lips. Her purpose was of course evident. The season began to get too mild, and, after a week of dry weather, a good sharp frost seemed indicated to keep the spring blossom in the bud for a while longer. Nature saw my apricot tree and smiled at the little tight bloom-buds, packed away within their winter quarters. Frost was just what they wanted to keep the eager white petals from trembling out and exposing the heart of the flower to danger. But then Nature caught sight of the beginning of my neighbour's potatoes, and she smiled no more. Too well she knew that Atkinson did not want her silver feet there. Experience of Atkinson in the past had taught her to

a syllable what he would say if she went that way in a robe fringed with ten degrees of frost. What was she to do? Either she must quarrel with me—one of her staunchest supporters—or make an enemy of Atkinson. Her evening was of course spoiled; but she did her duty—at least I think so. The next morning I looked "with an auspicious and a dropping eye" at my fruit tree and Atkinson's despondent 'earlies.' He was storming about in a hot-house—using tropical language to his tropical flora—and when he saw me, he emerged, like an angry lion from its lair, and asked me what I thought of our loathsome climate now. I said the Spring was full of surprises, as usual; then winked down at my apricot tree.

Do not, however, suppose that I have any secret understanding with Nature—far from it. Nobody has endured more from her in one quiet way and another than have I. If she had arranged more silver and gold in certain places under the earth, before I was born, I should not be sitting here writing this book now, and we should all have escaped it; if she had been of a different opinion as to the proportion of uric acid that might possibly be developed in my system, when the ingredients were discussed and decided, I should have avoided many troublesome experiences; and if she had specially interested herself in my attempts to establish half-hardy bulbs, she would have smiled far oftener upon my white rockery than is actually the case. For my part I can stand her fiery or her frosty moods; but what one dislikes is to see her

always crying. And half-hardy bulbs also dislike it. They are not accustomed to her low spirits in Northern climes. A tropical torrent they know—let her weep and be done with it—but this incessant lachrymation wears them down, and wears them out. They yearn to go home, and, in the gardener's sense, a great many of them do so. If Nature would only let me arrange the watering and look after the sun herself, we might get some famous results; but she will do it all.

Now concerning bulbs, when such things cost many shillings, my experiments are not conducted on a scale to satisfy the scientific mind; but thanks to the Dutch, very few fine plants cost much money nowadays, and I feel that Nature may drown my garden annually, so long as she abstains from drowning Holland.

Let us take by far the best catalogue that I know for these things and run through it.

Of hyacinths nothing more need be said, and of tulips but little. Concerning the latter, however, I must give you an idea. Should you want a lovely bed of tulips by the end of February, it can be done. The secret is for once in a way to get your bulbs from the South of France, instead of Holland. On the Riviera, tulips are ripe and ready for market by the end of May. I shook hardened gardeners this year with a bed of a hundred T. præcox, var. Dammanni, ablaze on the 3rd of March. For thirty francs this wonder may be performed, given a reasonable winter. The secret is to have your bulbs planted by the end of June;

and the difficulty is to find room for them. But you can easily arrange an annual over them, and pull it up when they spear. Good choice species for the rockery are Greigi, from Turkestan, with spotted foliage and dazzling scarlet petals; Clusiana, a lovely thing in the bud; Kolpakowskiana, red and yellow; pulchella, a rich carmine with deep blue eye; and the familiar florentina, a fragrant, fine yellow tulip which often carries two or three flowers on the same stem. Linifolia, a tiny tulip with brilliant scarlet bloom and bulbs the size of a filbert, is another precious thing, and exquisite on the rockery.

The crocus, of course, can look after itself. Of autumn flowering species I like best pulchellus—a small bloom of an infinitely tender and dove-like lavender with yellow eye. Longiflorus is only less attractive, and speciosus has a grand purple bloom of considerable size. Sativus, the saffron crocus, with its fragrant blossom and rich crimson tassels, is very beautiful, but rather a shy bloomer with me, and Scharojani, the rare, orange-red flower from Circassia, is said to blossom in August. Perhaps conscious of not being wanted at that season, my solitary bulb, though healthy, has so far refused to bloom. Imperati is a grand late crocus. It has a pale blue and purple-striped blossom, and attains to considerable size. Medius is nearly white with purple veins; and Zonatus, from Lebanon, one ought also to possess if catalogues speak true. With Spring, Sieberi appears, and Alatavicus, which I added last year, but missed its bloom. Biflorus, the lovely

Scotch crocus, should be in any serious collection; also biflorus pusillus and Leedsii. Colchicums are hardy in proper quarters. They like half shade, and should be planted where their heavy foliage may ripen through early summer without being a nuisance. Their masses of white, lavender, and purple brighten autumn. Try Parkinsoni—a chequered pale and dark purple; autumnale—white and purple; speciosum and byzantinum, to begin with.

Of anemones fill spare patches of grass with apennina and fulgens. For the rockery, Robinsoniana, palmata, and the little yellow ranunculoides are good. Ranunculus does well planted pretty deep in autumn. The Persians and double French and Turbans must, of course, be dug up and dried off after flowering; but I am very impatient of things that demand so much fuss, and do not personally think ranunculus quite worth it. Concerning varieties, amplexicaulis is beautiful, and need not be lifted after flowering. It does well with me. Lyalli, a New Zealand buttercup, is perhaps the finest of all. This is hardy at Kew, so you will do well to get it, if you know where.[1] Crown imperials and fritillaries appear next in my catalogue. I have grown grand imperials, but the bulbs slowly deteriorate and never increase. Ruthenica is a lovely fritillary, and so is pyrenaica. Aurea is another little golden beauty, but a shy flowerer. Moggridgei must be beautiful, and also Walujewi. I have wasted many a good shilling on

[1] *If you know where.* Since writing this chapter I have found where. Messrs. Gauntlett & Co. of Redruth supply it.

this last, but never flowered it. Recurva is a fine plant, and meleagris, the snake's head, nods in hundreds of little sad-coloured, drooping bells over my white rockery in April.

Of babiana I can only say that they are nearly hardy. I have seen none of the really lovely species figured in old botanies—such as tubiflora, stricta, or spathacea—but I believe they may be got. Like ixia, sparaxis, and some gladiolus, they shoot early, and their foliage is apt to be spoiled. They deteriorate with years, and as mine were never grand varieties, but only a cheap and very mixed company when they joined me, I generally pull them up now when their hot purple catches my eye. This is a bulb I must grow again seriously, and the same remark applies to tritonia. The rich yellow and scarlet-orange of tritonia is very agreeable, and his habits are good. He too suffers from spring frost. Our mild autumns delude many half-hardy bulbs into making a start, with a result that their green plumes are often dashed before blooming. Tritonia flowers in June, and is well worth a place in your rockery.

Of ixia I have already spoken. It is absolutely hardy in a well-drained, sunny spot, but simply for the sake of the foliage they might be dug up when ripe and not planted again till early spring. Sparaxis is the first of my Cape bulbs to appear. It is often out before Pushkinia and scilla have done. Nobody can afford to be without Mr. Wallace's lovely sparaxis, "Fire King." This is the grand old ixia tri-color revived. A hundred years and more ago there was

rare confusion between the lesser Cape bulbs, and gladiolus ran into Watsonia; and ixia embraced babiana and morphixia sometimes; and sparaxis was always ixia too; and antholyza helped to worry the botanists also. Then appeared Mr. Gawler and proposed to form a new genus and separate sparaxis from the rest for evermore. The botanical world smiled upon his idea, and this fine bulb came to its own. The rich black, yellow, and scarlet of "Fire King" always creates a sensation in my rockery. It is hardy as the type, and fears nothing but slugs. Another choice sparaxis is "Lady Carey" —white with a shade of pale purple—and "Queen Victoria" is also good.

Morphixia has a colour-scheme of warm pinks and yellows. These plants are not as handsome as ixias, and perhaps not quite as hardy; but they are graceful and pleasant, and eighteenpence a dozen, so you had better try them. M. longiflora is really handsome.

Many varieties of oxalis are hardy. There is no prettier little mite in a striped white and scarlet petticoat than versicolor. Bowiei, too, may be tried. It is a lovely rose, and quite hardy. I know little of this family, but have often admired the handsome oxalis cernua abroad, and been annoyed by the busy little ubiquitous corniculata at home. This climbs on to the white rockery when my back is turned, tangles into its betters, sends up saucy yellow blooms over its purple leaves, and defies removal.

Calochortus is a special favourite of mine. This noble flower has a sloped bank in my rockery, and

since he suffers from almost chronic hydrophobia, I cover him up in winter with a cold frame. This is better than brake-fern, matting, or straw, which I have seen advised, because, in these things, horrid forms of insect life collect and cabal and adjourn to eat the spears of calochortus during earliest spring before you think they are above ground. But the light of day has no charm for such sons of darkness, and my butterfly tulips keep dry and happy under a frame. Some sorts are hardier than others. Benthami and lilacinus came up year after year with me; others are not so regular. C. Albus used to do well, but I think it has gone; C. Kennedyi I tried in vain, but the fault has been in the bulbs. C. Macrocarpus I must have. The Venustus varieties of this beautiful Californian flower are perhaps the loveliest, with their rosy petals and brown and yellow blotches and markings. In Kent they thrive exceedingly under intelligent treatment, and I often think that some sandy ridge in Kent would be the ideal home for most half-hardy bulbs.

Brodiæa needs merely to be mentioned. It is strong enough, and flourishes in respectable soil facing south. B. coccinea is showy, and I believe B. Howelli is worth growing, but few are to my mind. Cyclamens do, of course, in a rockery. I dug up some large ones in North Africa, and they ought to have been at least tender, but they showed no signs of it, and flowered gaily. The little autumnal and spring cyclamens increase rapidly, and do their own seed-planting with that wonderful spiral contrivance of theirs. I remember how about the foothills of Lebanon a lovely

pale pink cyclamen grew and clustered everywhere. Doubtless this is the new "Libanoticum" of Herr Anton Roozen's catalogue. The spring flowering C. Coum—white and rose—are good, also C. repandum.

Lilium must be mentioned elsewhere; royalty cannot be herded with commoners. Alströmeria is for the most part hardy, but my favourite, Pelegrina alba, the lily of the Incas, should have a wall. I grow this with amaryllis belladonna outside a vinery in the eye of the sun, and its glittering, glaucous foliage and exquisite snowy-white flowers are good. Do try this; but it makes the other members of the clan look mere gaudy mountebanks. Pancratium maritimum is the only variety of this grand bulb that I have tried out of doors. It flowered once. Much foliage came up subsequently, but no more flowers. It is worth a pot. Crinum capense flowers well with me in a snug spot on the rockwork. Plant very deep, and he will probably be all right. Montbretia is a garden weed in this place. Sulphurea I admire, and rosea must be beautiful, but I have never seen it. Funkias are hardy enough with me, and flower well. This plant is reserved by caterpillars for their parties; and as they are hospitality itself, you must be watchful. F. glauca is very handsome; and, if you like variegated leaves, albo marginata will please you. F. Fortunei from Japan is also very good, to my mind.

Convallaria needs mere mention, and polygonatum also. Kniphofias are, of course, hardy. "Obelisk" is

a lovely, pure, rich golden torch-lily of great size, and some of the dwarf sorts would look well on large rock-work. With yuccas they make a handsome show. Of terrestrial orchids I know nothing, except a little about the family of ophrys. Several of these I have dug up in Africa and in France. Lutea is handsome, and speculum a very lovely thing. Apifera is hardy, and grows wild within a walk of me. I have dallied with serapias, but to see him wild in his home is joy enough; and since these things are blooming when one is in their company, it seems almost useless to move them unless you take a good lump of France or Italy at the same time. But when one considers what overweight means on the journey home, one hesitates. Cyprepedium spectabile and the rare British C. Calceolus I have, but others of the hardy cyprepediums are even more beautiful.

Gladiolus ought to command a chapter, but it cannot be done. The subject is huge and fascinating, though here I may only name a few of my own favourite species. As a rule I practically ignore hybrids, but with gladiolus they must be considered. Blandus one grows, of course—a delicate and delightful thing; colvillei, in the shape of the familiar and ubiquitous "Bride," leaps in little sheafs upward on my rockery with roseus and trimaculatus. Insignis, a splendid scarlet gladiolus flaked with purple, and cardinalis—scarlet, with white flake—cannot be refused a place. Sulphureus I have failed to flower in the open, and am reluctantly giving him a pot this year. Purpureo auratus and gandevensis are the parents of the lovely

THE LILY OF THE INCAS.

GLADIOLUS- HYBRIDS OF NANUS.

Lemoine section. The former—a flower of purple and gold—is very handsome, but far more delicate of constitution and dainty of habit than most of its children. Why do people object to the hooded gladiolus? Some most exquisite tropical species are hooded.

G. Purpureo auratus I dig up in the winter, but I doubt if this is necessary. Milleri is very early—a fragrant, white, scented thing, but tender. Trimaculatus has the usual three blotches in light crimson on a rose ground. Ringens is blue—so they say; but I have not succeeded with it. Tristis has a pale yellow petal touched with brown; communis roseus is a very fine colour and an early flowerer. Of ramosus varieties, formosissimus is essential, and other superb things are "Ne Plus Ultra," "Queen Victoria," and "Van Speyk."

Hybrids of Nanus are all more or less lovely, and among my little group of these most delicate and brilliant flowers I find the names of "Poniatowski," scarlet; "Rembrandt," white and lilac rose; "The Queen," white and pure rose; "W. M'Intosh," orange-scarlet; "Delicata," white and maroon; and "Lucretia," white with cream-coloured blotch outlined in pink—a most beautiful gladiolus. All these at the end of June are a very splendid spectacle.

Of other hybrids many are, of course, magnificent, but my taste turns to the Lemoine sorts. The form is not so popular as the great and grand gandavensis hybrids; but none of the latter can compare with some of the choicer Lemoines in splendour of colour-

ing. Get a dozen of that deep crimson wonder "Achanti" and astound your friends. Try also "Demi-Deuil"—a fine thing in two shades of purple; "Eclipse," deep crimson and cream; and "Marc Micheli," pale lilac and violet. A hundred corms of "Marie Lemoine," pale yellow with crimson blotch, are good for cutting from, and others of the Lemoine hybrids will attract you if you study a catalogue of them. G. Nancianus was also raised by M. Lemoine at Nancy out of G. Saundersii. These are huge, but rather coarse to my taste. G. Childsii is a traveller. It went to America, and returned with the name of a great grower there. Some are rather grand, such as "Mohonk," "Boston," &c. The monarch of all hybrids is Herr Max Leichtlin's beauty, "Princeps"—a brilliant scarlet cross between gandavensis and cruentus. These, of course, are but a handful of what you may possess.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WHITE ROCKERY (*concluded*)

IN many respects I have much in common with half-hardy bulbs. The affinity becomes more marked as I grow older. As with them it is necessary that they shall be thoroughly ripened if bloom is to be achieved, so with me the same thing should be done. When my foliage is down, which invariably happens after paying the Christmas bills, the correct treatment is to take me south to the sun, or failing that, to keep me under glass. From eight to twelve weeks of this scorching is all that appears to be necessary. Then I can be brought back, started in gentle heat, hardened off briskly, and trusted to put forth my usual humble inflorescence. The most perfect winter treatment I ever received was long ago in the West Indies, where I used to tramp the sandy margins of Tobago and Grenada in direct sunshine, while other men sat feebly under awnings in clubs, or on deck, and drank fortified milk from the green cocoanut. What vigour resulted — what a superabundance of sub-tropical bloom burst from me! I remember that I had six Christmas stories in Christmas numbers; I published a novel also, and, as if that was not enough, wrote poems, articles of foreign travel, and

descriptions of the wonders of the deep. I finished the year by getting married and coming into the malignant sphere of Income Tax. Once, and only once, the ripening failed me. I did not ripen in North Africa. I got pneumonia there instead. It was interesting, in a personal way, and is treated of under Iris stylosa. Neither did Syria ripen me as I could wish, though it is a good country for bulbs; and, if only for the sake of its tuberous irises and Iris Lorteti, one of the loveliest flowers in the world, ought to be rescued from Turkey's evil misrule and restored to the chosen people.

Out of Lebanon comes my favourite spring bulb — Puschkinia libanotica; while P. scilloides, which differs but slightly from the other, is found in Armenia. These dainty things—blue and white striped — are very hardy, and I know few more pleasing flowers in March. Of Ferraria[1] or tigridia, the tiger-iris, I have a variety. Conchiflora, pavonia, pavonia alba, and pavonia alba immaculata are glorious creatures; while of others, pavonia aurea and pavonia lutea immaculata are exquisite. I plant deep, and they come up year after year, their extraordinary distinction and splendour making up for the sad shortness of their hours. F. pulchella is a lovely little atom. I was waiting for it a fortnight last year; then forgot it for twenty-four hours,

[1] *Ferraria.* "We lament," says Curtis, "that this affords our fair countrywomen another lesson how extremely fugacious is loveliness of form. Born to display its beauty but for a few hours, it literally melts away."

THREE HYBRIDS OF LEMOINE.
(*Achanti—Eclipse—Princeps.*)

UNIV. OF MICH.

ALBUCA NELSONI.

and it seized the moment to flower. F. undulata is an interesting tigridia, but I have never yet flowered it either under glass or in the open. Another irid I have muddled is the black and scarlet Mexican, rigidella orthantha. It makes strong, promising growth, after the fashion of similar things, but never attempts a flower. Coming, as it should, in October, it may be unreasonable to expect success Pohlia platensis does little better, though this is really not in the least difficult. It flowered once with me, and very beautiful and interesting it was; but since then, though vigorous, no bloom-spike thickens.

Some people are surprised to hear that the tuberose—polianthes tuberosa—can be flowered out of doors; yet in a warm, sandy bed they will do well, given a hot summer. Planted during spring, they flower with autumn, and come a delicate white, shaded with pink, rather than the pure white of the pot plant. Agapanthus, the blue Mexican lily, is certainly hardy, and does far better with me in the open than elsewhere, If planted in light, rich, but sandy stuff, well drained and sheltered in reason, this grand thing may be trusted, even though the frost cuts it pretty near to the ground in winter. The white varieties are perhaps more tender than the blue. Albuca Nelsoni is a handsome Cape bulb, and its spikes of white and green flowers rise finely above the foliage. It is hardy enough with me, and increases. Of the onions, I like azureum, magicum, neapolitanum, pedemontanum, and the old yellow moly. Allium is hardy enough, and there are very

probably many better than these that I know. The Piedmont plant is beautiful in its way, and so is the sky-blue azureum. Anomatheca gets its foliage dashed by frost, but does not mind in the least. This very fascinating little Cape irid is hardy, and increases from seed at a great pace. I like its brilliant crimson blotched with darker hue. Cruenta is the common form; a plant sold as "grandiflora," which comes from tropical East Africa, belongs really to the lapeyrousia race. Antholyza I have not tried, but I am going to pull up my remaining Watsonias and put antholyza in their place against a warm wall. Watsonia is rather uninteresting, so far as I have got with it. The plant is hardy enough, but the bloom is scattered and somewhat mean both in shape and colour. I must try Watsonia iridiflora O'Brieni. You can see this in a picture of the "Supplement of the Dictionary of Gardening," and it looks most attractive. Watsonias, says an old authority, vary their colours, and the same bulb will produce pale pink flowers one year, perhaps dark crimson the next, and possibly a variegated bloom in the third. I had hoped mine might do something original of this sort; but they never soared above a paltry brick-red. Bernardias are wretched little squills not worth growing. Bessara is a scarlet gem, and should be tried out of doors, for in some west-country gardens it prospers thus. Mr. W. Fitzherbert, one of our most distinguished and skilful Devon gardeners, has cultivated it with success in the open air, I understand.

Bloomeria, to my untutored eye, is merely a yellow

brodiœa. It is hardy with me in a snug spot on the white rockery; but there will be no crape worn when it falls out, for the space can be put to better purpose. Chionodoxa is a little treasure that needs no more than affectionate mention. I hear the variety Tmolusi is quite the most perfect thing in snow-glories that has yet appeared. Chlidanthus fragrans defies me. It sends up strong foliage, but has never flowered. It is, I understand, really a little yellow pancratium, and ought to do perfectly well. Coburgia has treated me in exactly the same manner; but this is a greenhouse plant and should not have been thrust into the air. I am a very poor hand at the Amaryllidaceæ. Commelina is another thing that expects to be dug up and stored away in winter. Last year I let mine go on expecting. Commelina cælestis is certainly a heavenly blue when you catch the flowers well out before midday, but quickly after noon the display is at an end, and nothing but a score of clammy blue beads remain to tell of the vanished beauty. White commelinas are also good. The plant is worth growing, but not worth fussing about. Cypella Herberti is a noble irid, and everybody should try it. I find it perfectly hardy; though in winter, out of mere affection, the plants have a little mound of fine soil three inches high raised about them. The vigour and abundance of their flowers is amazing. From June onward until late September they open an unceasing supply of rich, tawny-orange blossoms, in shape like a small tigridia. There is a touch of purple in their hearts, streaked on the outer petals and spattered on

the inner ones. The standards curl over, like little sharp-pointed tongues. The flowers are fleeting, but their extraordinary abundance atones for this. Five and six blooms are frequently out together. Give cypella a roasting spot in full sun, and don't go through another spring without it. For sixpence this magnificent thing may be yours! Eranthis needs mere mention. Its cheerful yellow brightens January and loves a shady spot. The great and glorious eremurus follows in my catalogue, and, as becomes such a wonder, he keeps up his majestic price; but Elwesianus can be purchased for a modest ten shillings now, and himalaicus costs but three. Warei, however, won't join you for less than four guineas. He is described as "salmon-pink with a tinge of magenta." That tinge will be his undoing. Salmon-pink is among the fairest colours a flower can take, but let a suspicion of magenta lurk, like a serpent, in the bud, and all is changed. The hybrid "him-rob" is a huge and splendid eremurus, and the yellow Bungeii must also be very fine. I have only himalaicus robustus and turkestanicus, the last a poor thing not worth growing. Eremurus is hardy, but you must watch its beginnings in Spring, as the sprawling lush foliage suffers with frost, and a bead of ice in the heart will be often enough to settle the infant flower-spike. These develop early, and by mid-March you learn whether your plant is going to flower or not. Nothing I know hates being moved like an eremurus. Turkestanicus, however, minds less. I let him linger about in corners from simple weakness. He is one

of those things you wish would die quietly and make room for a finer plant; and yet you do not quite like boldly to uproot and destroy it. Erythroniums are, of course, hardy enough, and their marbled foliage and pink, white, and yellow flowers are pleasant in spring. Eucomis O'Brieni and E. punctata are both hardy, and their spikes of green and brown—in the case of punctata topped with leaves—have a quiet charm of their own. They cannot, however, be called showy, but are worth a spare corner. Freesias will grow and seed freely against a warm wall; but they flower late, when you don't want them, and are better in pots. It is a pleasant thing to see scented acres of their pale lemon and white blossoms making the sunshine fragrant about Hyères in March. Galtonia is pretty hardy. It goes well in masses with the common scarlet gladiolus brenchleyensis. Both can safely be left to weather winter in the ground with me, but I plant rather deep. I much regret to find that very lovely mite, geissorhiza, is not hardy. She must be grown in pots under a cold frame. I think our winter wet is too much for her. But there is no lovelier little irid than G. Rochensis, the plaid ixia, as it used to be called. The petal tips are purple, then comes a ring of pale colour, and the heart of the flower is crimson. Twice only I flowered it out of doors in successive years. Then my few bulbs expired. G. alba I tried to flower, but failed. Geissorhiza blooms in May, and is well worthy of pots. Gelasine azurea, another irid, is hardy, but not worth growing in my experience, for the flowers are small

and very short-lived. Gelasinos, I find, means "a smiling dimple"—a pretty name that ought to have been given to a better thing. Habranthus I have attempted in a hot corner out of doors, but without success. As a genus, habranthus seems to have been swept away altogether, and referred to zephyranthes and hippeastrum. If I had known this sooner, perhaps I should not have played the fool with them in the open air.

It must be rather trying to an established genus to be suddenly thrust into another. I wonder if this will ever happen to us? Perhaps in a few millions of years genus homo as he is to-day will be referred by genus homo, as he is then, to pithecanthropus. By the way, how do we know that pithecanthropus couldn't talk? Who can prove him dumb? Or, perhaps, since the gulf between the coming man and ourselves may be more considerable than that between us and our own ancestors, the anthropologists of that time will calmly throw us back to a merry lemur who rejoiced in Tertiary times, and reserve genus homo for themselves. On the other hand, they may leave us alone and start a grand new genus. They will probably look plain, those people of the future, but their brains, to ours, will be as ours to the uncalculating opossum.

Hedychium coronarium, the Indian garland flower, is tender, and belongs to the stove. In mine he is monarch of all he surveys. Hedychium Gardnerianum, however, may be called hardy here in a snug corner, and it blooms nobly during August with agapanthus,

CYPELLA HERBERTI.

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HEDYCHIUM CORONARIUM.

erythrina, and pardanthus chinensis, the blackberry lily. This last is another hardy irid—one of the most beautiful—and its rich, splashed, blood-orange-coloured flowers greatly impress those who have not before met with them. Its habit is like an iris, and it stands two to three feet high at blooming. Its trivial name comes from the black seeds. To return to hedychium, flavum is another fine species held to be hardy in the west country. But I think good spikes of Gardner's plant, with its lovely form, lemon flowers, and scarlet additions, hard to beat.

The East Indian H. coronarium is snow-white and deliciously fragrant. It springs from the crown of the leafy spikes. In the Malaccas it is a favourite decoration of Indian belles; but if sent as a present to a young man, it is intended to reproach him with inconstancy in love.

Korolkowia discolor makes a cheerful sight on a rock-ledge early in March. Its glaucous foliage and little pagoda of bronze bells furnish a striking object. K. Sewerzowi must be even handsomer. Give them a hot, sandy spot and they will thrive. Was this the same Russian General Korolkow who found that glorious Regelia iris that will embalm his name?

Herbertia I have not flowered in the open; but the fault is mine. They are named after Dr. William Herbert, a famous Dean of Manchester; and if he could grow them, so should we. Nevertheless he may have used a cold frame. H. pulchella and H. cærulea are the best, and they must be attempted again. Yet another irid is the orange-scarlet Homeria

collina, with a bloom like a sparaxis. It is brilliant, and fairly long lived for an irid, but it is not hardy, and its odour handicaps it in the race for popularity, though in its South African home, the scent no doubt proves a source of strength. Scent is a big subject, and Bacon, who has something wise or fatuous to say on every conceivable theme that can interest a human being, makes observations concerning it. He distinguishes subtly between "fast flowers of their smells," and those which are not so niggard, but generously cast their fragrance upon the air, and breathe out their sweetness "like the warbling of music." Roses—damask or red—he calls fast flowers, and bays, and marjoram, and rosemary. These things want a little pressure to bring out their high qualities. Like many people you could name, they need a pinch to develop their flavour; and, to press the figure, not a few plants and men, by reason of their notorious qualities in that sort, never get pinched at all—which in the case of the plant suits it well, but in the case of the man is very bad for him. The most generous of his flowers Bacon found to be the violet, with the musk-rose a good second. Strawberry leaves dying "yield a most excellent cordial smell," he tells us; and among other fragrant things he cites the flower of the vine, sweet-brier, wall-flowers, pinks, clove gilliflowers, the lime tree, and honeysuckle. Next he treats of sweet foliage, and tells us to plant burnet, wild thyme, and water-mints in our alleys, that they may be trodden upon and crushed, and yield their fragrance out of personal affliction.

The sweetest thing in my garden is a marjoram: origanum Maru, the "eau-de-cologne" plant, as we call it. But the odour is too sophisticated — like a whiff from a perfumer's. Daphne cneorum is very delicious; but the best scent I know is that of wild wood hyacinths, in some glade, where sunlight soaks and drips in pure green-gold through a million infant leaves, and the blue and purple beneath gleam in sun and lie cool as a cloud-shadow in shade, while the pale spikes open and droop their countless fairy bells to worship the ground that bore them. Orchid people, of course, say there is nothing like a Vanda for exquisite perfume, and certainly my neighbour's are exceedingly sweet.

With the lovely lapeyrousias I have failed so far; but leontice, the lion's leaf, is vigorous of foliage, and free of yellow, dark-veined flowers in February upon a rock-ledge. Hypoxis is another failure, and after several attempts I must pronounce him not hardy so far as this garden is concerned. It is a slight consolation to read in Professor Nicholson that very few are worth growing; but one is tempted to fall back on the 'grapes are sour' theory rather often with half-hardy bulbs. As a matter of fact not half-a-dozen times in as many years have I flowered anything not worth growing. There was a wretched phlomis tuberosa that reached enormous proportions and took two men to drag it to the dustbin; then there was hyoscyamus orientalis, which I got, hoping that it might be as lovely as our own rare and weird English H. niger, the henbane. But a dingier, meaner, more hang-dog

plant never scowled out of a border. Of small bulbs that I do not honestly think are worth growing I might name a dozen or so; but it is unsportsmanlike to publish a black list of this kind; moreover, in each case somebody would be sure to find themselves of a different opinion. A tiny mite that is worth a corner is Beilia triticea, or triticea juncea. It is quite hardy in the usual peat and sand and throws up a spike a foot high, like a very miniature gladiolus, of pale mauve flowers.

Ixiolirions are beautiful things and hardy. Their blue is rather distinctive and their habit handsome. They like to be dry in winter, and if you plant them with your calochortus bulbs, the same frame will cover both when they are resting. Ixiolirion tartaricum brachyantherum (pardon the name) is a late flowerer of a lovely blue. Leucojum is, of course, hardy, but I don't find the choicer sorts much disposed to flower. L. Autumnale is fitful, but a very beautiful little atom when it appears, and L. roseum, from Corsica, another autumn bloomer, must be even fairer; but so far this has not honoured me with flowers. Merendera is, I fancy, hardy, and the rose-coloured M. sobolifera used to be one of the first blossoms of February with me when I had it. Their blooms are like little colchicums. M. Bulbocodium, from the Sierra Nevada, is said to be the best. Moræa, with the exception of that notable irid, M. Robinsoniana from Australia, is a bulbous plant, and comes from the Cape. I have muddled these things for some years. M. Edulis and M. papilionacea have made feeble efforts to flower,

but none worth dwelling upon. We are told that they succeed with the same treatment as ixias—a very favourite statement in catalogues; but I have not found it so. However, the loveliest of all, M. glaucopis,[1] generally called the peacock iris, does well with me, and you shall not see anything lovelier in the family than its blue, purple, and black eye on a white ground. The reverse of the fall is streaked with purple. M. iridioides, white, yellow, and brown, is strongly recommended and considered quite hardy in Holland; but I know it not. There has been a tremendous botanical clearance in this genus, and a dozen familiar things, most of which I have already mentioned, are now turned out of it. Mr. J. G. Baker, the first expert, says that a "line of demarcation between *Iris* and *Moræa* has been drawn in different places by different authorities." He follows Bentham and places Iris in the North Temperate zone and Moræa at the Cape and in tropical Africa. The rule is simple, and where Bentham and Baker march hand in hand, you and I may follow with easy confidence. The grand M. Robinsoniana came from Australia during 1877, and is now in all good catalogues. It resembles on a smaller scale the habit of phormium tenax, and is in its own country the favourite wedding flower. I have so far failed with it in the open, and have not heard that it has prospered thus; but this year I

[1] *M. glaucopis.* The real name of the familiar Iris pavonia is Morœa glaucopis, the owl-eyed morœa; but for my part I shall not desert the peacock's tail for the owl's eye. The true Morœa pavonia appears to be another plant.

was privileged to see some fine flower-spikes in pots. It shoots up a lofty stem from its great foliage and produces scattered white blossoms splashed with gold. It is a fleeting but a noble moræa.

Ornithogalum arabicum prospers grandly out of doors, and only asks for deep planting and plenty of sunshine. O. aureum failed with me. Nutans is, of course, hardy, and its handsome green and white blooms begin to appear before February is over. The little Star of Bethlehem, O. umbellatum, twinkles in May. The frame species I do not know. Phædranassa is said to do in a warm border. Mine did nothing under those conditions, but I flowered them afterwards in a cool house, and then parted from them without emotion. They affect the yellows, oranges, and greens of lachenalia, but don't manage the colours so well to my mind. Always understand, however, that I speak with the utmost humility when criticising unfavourably anything that blooms. My opinion is purely personal, and a man whose criticism on any subject was worth less never lived. I have lacked the critical faculty from my youth up. There are possibly people who think the world of phædranassa; it may touch a magic chord in your heart: at any rate an outlay of fourpence will enable you to make the experiment. Romulea is hardy, and his kinsman, spatalanthus, for some years opened shining purple, yellow-eyed blossoms in a hot corner; but I rather think in digging when he was down I accidentally slew him. This beautiful little flower should be tried in a cold frame if you dare not trust it out of

doors. The rose-coloured romulea flourishes much with me, and opens its bright blooms by the dozen on a sunny morning; but it appears to be very impatient and distrustful of cloud, and soon shuts, like sparaxis, in shade. It is not strictly rose-coloured at all, but totters on the verge of magenta. Sarana, the so-called black fritillary, failed with me; but I think it is easy enough, as anything surely should be that flourishes in Kamtchatka. Perhaps, however, it wants more bracing, and might like to winter in a refrigerator. Schizostylis, the Kaffir lily, is a valuable gladiolus-like plant with spikes of crimson blossoms in October and November. A good mass in the kitchen garden will repay the room you give it, and prove invaluable for the house, if you feel as I do, that chrysanthemums, and nothing but chrysanthemums, soon become a weariness. Sisyrinchiums are pretty little hardy things, and spring in sheafs, yellow and blue, upon my white rockery. Smilacina I am trying to establish in a cool corner. It is, of course, as hardy as lily of the valley; but this dainty little "herbe aux turquoise" has not as yet ripened its blue berries with me, or shown any wish to do so. Sternbergia is hardy and brightens autumn with his yellow cups, but S. Fischeriana, a new variety, flowers in spring, I hear. Nobody wants him then, for that is the hour of the crocus. S. Macrantha flowers before his leaves; but I like best the common Sternbergia lutea, whose bloom and bright green foliage come together.

Libertia is a noble, iris-like plant, and does in half sunshine. I give a picture of it with a mass of Iris

sibirica, which prospers along with it. L. azurea and L. tricolor should be tried in pots; but I have failed with them out of doors. Melantheum Massonia, too, which I learn is a pretty and singular Cape bulb, has done no more than throw up a dozen strap-shaped leaves of a dark colour. A passing slug nibbled one, and Massonia appears to have died—of simple fright. Things that are going to lose their nerve about a mere playful nip of this sort are no good to me. But I am trying Massonia again.

Marica Cærulea[1] won't succeed in the open, but it is worthy of a pot. The plant makes huge foliage, like Moræa Robinsoniana, and its flower and behaviour is that of tigridia. A fairer thing I never saw. The falls are spoon-shaped, very large, and of the lovely blue of the Algerian iris. The cup is spattered with a pale, pure brown, and the standards rise in three little curls. The pollen is a strange green. Properly grown, it flowers almost as freely as cypella. I must get more of marica. M. lutea and M. brachypus are both grand things, also M. Northiana. Cærulea sends forth a flat flower-stem, and rises three feet to five from pot level.

Tricyrtis, the toad-lily, is hardy here, but flowers so late that the rough weather of October often ruins it. I have seen splendid pots of the various species in the garden of a friend. Tricyrtis hirta nigra and T. hirta grandiflora are both interesting. T. macropodum is

[1] *Marica cærulea.* Amid the wonderful flower-pictures by the late Miss North, to be seen at Kew, is a good portrait of this marica (No. 70) under the title of "Palma de Santa Rita."

MARICA CÆRULEA.

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BRAVOA GEMINIFLORA.

said to flower earlier, and have a black and yellow bloom. Triteleia—white and blue—increase at a great pace, and fill spare corners swiftly with their very pretty flowers. Triteleia laxa maxima, of a rich Tyrian purple, is a very handsome thing. There are many others I know not. Tulbaghia I have failed to flower; and Wachendorfia is another bulb that should, but certainly does not, succeed under treatment of ixia. It lives and thrusts scarlet points out of the soil, then retreats again. Wurmbea spicata is not exciting, but a worthy little thing in its little way—a white bloom touched with a pale red. Zephyranthes candida is the only really hardy species of this beautiful genus. Its snowy stars sparkle out with amaryllis belladonna under a warm wall. I have tried others out of doors, but done nothing with them. Zigadenus is another thing that I have failed with—the fault being mine; and that brings me to the end of the alphabet, if not your patience.

I will, however, just dash back through the catalogue to see if I have missed anything. Yes—here is Hesperoscordum from California, a tall, small umbel of little flowers, gawky and unbeautiful, but to be grown for their wonderful fragrance. Hessea and Hesperantha do not appear to like my arrangements for them out of doors; but Hesperoscallis is said to be hardy, and must be tried. Crocosmia you should grow. It is a highly glorified montbretia, and the variety, aurea imperialis, is a noble plant. Drymopsis, though said to be hardy, does not do much with me. Bravoa geminiflora is one of my special favourites, and never

fails to gladden July with its dainty shower of twin scarlet blossoms. This is one of my greatest successes, and wins general admiration. Of anthericums other than the familiar lilies of St. Bruno and St. Bernard, I recommend A. algeriense—a very beautiful variety with dark green foliage and golden anthers; while A. lineare, with variegated foliage, makes a neat pot plant if you cut off the worthless bloom-spikes. This pleasant thing comes from the Cape, and you may find it sometimes under the lordly name of phalangium argenteo-lineare. Aristea Eckloni—another of the endless Cape irids—is scarcely hardy. It lives out of doors, but looks consumptive and emaciated. In a cool house, however, it makes a brave show, and furnishes a lovely blue blossom. Arthropodium cirrhatum, a pretty New Zealand lily, also does in a pot, but I think it would hardly prosper out of doors. Its bloom is a dainty shower of little white flowers on a long stem.

Arums are interesting, and A. italica makes magnificent scarlet corals in winter, though the great green spathe and yellow club have no special charm. Cornutum and crinatum are both wonderful; but I cannot do anything with them except get foliage in the open air. Dracunculus is as hardy as any dragon, and his purple towers annually above the marbled stem. Concerning this weird monster says Parkinson, "The chief use whereunto Dragons are applyed, is, that according to an old received custome and tradition (and not the judgement of any learned Author) the distilled water is given with Mithradatum

or Treakle to expell noysome and pestilentiall vapours from the heart."

Bæometra columellaris defies me. It must, I suppose, have glass. Chrysobactron Hookeri is a kinsman of anthericum; but I can only record failure here. It succeeds in leaf-mould and sand, so the books say, but mine have not done so. Cyanella, too, is a disappointment, though they sound pleasant little things, both blue and yellow. Frame culture is troublesome work, though many of these small plants are well worth the amateur's trouble. I welcome them in their appointed seasons in the white rockery; but when there has to be fussing and pottering and poking about in cold frames, with all the business of ventilation and watering, I find my time will not extend to it. Cooperia Drummondi, however, one must find leisure to grow. I have failed with this lovely "evening star"; but you may see it splendidly grown in a cold frame against a hot wall at Kew. The single snowy blooms and glaucous foliage make a rare flower-picture.

Micranthus plantagineus has a spike of blue flowers, and is fairly hardy. It is very handsome, and worth a warm corner. Another treasure, Tecophilæa cyaneo-crocea (a Chilian irid), has so far not favoured me with its sky-blue blossom.

Uropetalon does nothing. You may find it under dipcadi in your catalogues. I fear it is no use on the rockery. Uvularia, of course, flourishes, but has few friends apparently. I like its graceful habit and twisted yellow petals. Leucocrinum, I think, is

going to do out of doors; but I cannot say with certainty yet.

And now I will name a last little gem by way of conclusion to this rough and ready survey. There are doubtless hundreds of other pretty half-hardy treasures beside this handful to be got from the inexhaustible storehouse of South Africa; but among them all you shall not flower a daintier atom than Melasphærula graminea. It is, I think, rare in cultivation. I got mine from Holland as something quite different, and only after considerable difficulty named it. A beautiful picture of the plant will be found in the *Botanical Magazine*, No. 615. One may describe melasphærula as a tiny gladiolus-like blossom carried on a twisted stem irregularly. It is yellowish-white, with dark crimson streaks on the petals, and has grassy foliage. It appears to be quite hardy, but I pay it the compliment of a piece of glass through the autumnal rains, and hope it may presently increase. It was found by Thunberg in the Groenekloof Hills at the Cape of Good Hope, and sent to Kew in 1787; but they have not got it there now, I believe. "In the capillary tenuity and elastic tremulousness of its branchlets, it reminds us of the quaking grass, Briza," says Curtis.

And now you may leave the white rockery; but do not be impatient with me, or endeavour after such an ordeal to escape from my garden altogether. There is much more that I desire to show you before you depart, and many cheerful things to tell you.

One important point must be made here. You will

naturally want to try some, if not all, of these dainty and wonderful African flowers next autumn, and you will consult English and many foreign catalogues in vain. But there is a world-famous Dutch house where all may be purchased, and where their quality shall be found of the very best. From Messrs. Ant. Roozen & Son, Overveen, near Haarlem, Holland, I procure nearly all my Cape plants, and, after trials extending over some years, rejoice to record the splendid character of their goods and the varied riches of their catalogue. It is quite a botanical education to study these pages; and next to seeing the plants appear in glory of bloom, you shall have no pleasanter horticultural experience than diving into one of their fascinating parcels and handling the roots and plump splendidly ripened corms, tubers, and bulbs which they supply.

CHAPTER IX

THE IRIS

I HAVE loved that grand lilaceous trinity, the lily, the iris, and the gladiolus, for many years; and sometimes the lily has been first in my affections and sometimes the iris, with gladiolus always a good third. But, slowly and surely, the iris has won highest place, and henceforth she is safe, for I am too old to change any more.

Think of the forms this enchantress can take and her manifold charms of colour. Regard also her moods, now coy and distant, now so lavish of her loveliness. Let us ignore the earlier fiction that she was a virgin, but rather, as later poets feign, hold her the delicious wife of the west wind and mother of Eros. With all respect to Aphrodite, Iris would make a better parent. From the least bulbous mite of a Mrs. Danford's iris, to the mighty orientalis gigantea, six feet high, what a variety shall be found! It is almost as remarkable as the range of colours—from white through every shade of blue and lavender and purple, yellow, orange and brown, grey, rose, and crimson to the copper darkness of the thunder-cloud, and actual black. Remember, too, how time is their slave. Given a cold frame and a little industry, you

may have irises blooming for ten months in the year. No sooner are the potted beauties of Bakeriana, Histrio, and histrioides over, than stylosa's scented glories await you out of doors, with alata as a companion. Then come reticulata, persica, stenophylla, with Warleyensis, sindjarensis, and other of the Juno group; and, following them in April, pumila of many varieties begins to bloom and, with lutescens and other fine irises, ushers in the summer pageant. Not until the glories of the marsh-lovers are over and lævigata has done, can the show be considered at an end; and even then pumila will often begin again during a generous season, while the lilac and gold loveliness of fimbriata brightens the conservatory, to the confusion of any early chrysanthemum mop that may be boasting itself in October. Fimbriata, or japonica, will flower at all times and seasons. I have a tall spike full of bloom on this day in late March, and I shall flower others during the year. The plant lives in the open air as much as possible to ripen for bloom. Last year it flowered during October in a sheltered corner, where a pot had been sunk. Mr. Irwin Lynch, whose magnificent "Book of the Iris" should be in every flower-lover's hand, advises us west-country gardeners to try I. japonica out of doors; and we have done so, but I think no flowers are yet recorded from the open ground.

I have about seventy irises to show you, and the best way will be to march with the authorities and present every beauty in her proper group. We will deal in sections, and marshal each array under its respective

banners with strange devices. Xiphion, Gynandiris, and Juno have bulbs; Hermodactylus trusts to a tuber; the rootstock of the precious Nepalenses is a bud, and their roots made me fancy that I had an alströmeria, when a generous friend—bless his kindly heart—gave me some of this rarest of irises straight from the Himalayas. In my spirit was a doubt, and therefore I evoked the giant "Slave of the Iris": the magician or jin who has won such world-wide reputation by his marvellous feats with this marvellous flower. He makes new irises as Paris makes new fashions; at his touch the wonders of the Oncocyclus and Regelia groups blend and mingle; at his nod these coy queens of the garden come forth in their royal robes to make even hardened horticulturists stare and hold their breath. And yet an amateur, a muddler, a duffer, who didn't know the root of nepalensis when he saw it, dared to summon the magician to his aid, and succeeded in winning from him rich stores of knowledge by return of post! All this is to say that Sir Michael Foster, with his usual generosity and enthusiasm where the rainbow flower is concerned, declared for nepalensis, and said that I was a lucky man to have it, since, even with him, the iris had become exceedingly scarce. Mark how virtue is rewarded. The friend who had given me my irises knew Sir Michael, and, on learning that he lacked this treasure, swiftly supplied him therewith. You see, my dear Cunningham, if you encourage people who trust for a living to printed pages, you must expect these surprises and find your light

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IRIS RETICULATA.

dragged from under the bushel, where you will hide it.

Pardon this digression. I was naming the various sections when led away. Beside those already mentioned, we must flit through the great rhizomatous groups and glance at Apogon, embracing the beardless people; Evansia, the crested family; Pseudevansia, whose beards begin but never get any forwarder; Oncocyclus, the glorious company of cushions; Regelia, heroines allied to the last and much intermarried, with Sir Michael Foster as Hymen. And finally we reach Pogoniris, or the bearded folk.

Photographs of irises are never entirely satisfactory. The purity of colour, the translucence of petal, and the fantastic forms of many among them cannot be reproduced happily. Even paintings are of little worth. Take reticulata, for example. A glance at the real thing will show the difficulties. These small irises defy pictorial reproduction, just as the small orchids do. You might as well try to paint a minute piece of cunning jewellery. Such living gems must be seen alive and examined with a magnifying glass before you can appreciate the infinite delicacy of their mottling, the balance of their frail parts, and the brilliancy of their pigments.

To begin with Xiphion, Xiphioides and Xiphium are the two great branches of this group, and to my mind the first, or "English" iris, as it is called, stands ahead of the "Spanish" sort. They come quickly after Xiphium, and soon make me forget it. Of Xiphioides

there are many lovely varieties. Their colours range from white through blues and lavenders to darkest plum and purple, while Xiphium has rather a different colour scheme from white through the yellows, browns, and purples to those wondrous lurid hues, as of an electric storm, that we meet in the Xiphium lusitanica called "Thunderbolt." There are many very lovely garden forms of both the "English" and "Spanish" iris, and such is their cheapness that anybody can mass them without a pang in his purse. They seed freely, and if you are a scientific gardener and not pushed for time, you may grow them thus, and perhaps be rewarded by raising a good new form or two.

Iris juncea flowers spasmodically with me, but its brilliant yellow blossom in June is very welcome. Another big iris belonging to the group is tingitana, from Tangiers. This is a sun-lover, and likes a roasting spot on the rockery. I find it a shy bloomer, but such a lovely iris is worthy of patience. Rather the same colour scheme as my favourite, sindjarensis, marks it. Standards and style-branches are a delicate lavender-blue, and the colour fades on the falls to a paler tint; a bold golden signal spreads on the fall, and the pollen is also golden. The style-arms are beautifully crested; the standards spring upright, and are slightly notched.

Reticulata and its lovely varieties may be named next; but, despite the beauty of Histrio, histrioides, and purpurea, there are no flowers in this group more fascinating than the type. It is among horti-

IRIS TINGITANA.

IRIS IBERICA.

cultural blessings that these things are so cheap; for my experience is that too often they deteriorate steadily, though new, well-ripened bulbs fare and flower to perfection through their first season, then they lose heart, send up leaves for a year or two more, and finally vanish. But reticulata has no such weakness. Let me describe her most usual form. Style, crest, and standard are of an intense violet-red, and the colour runs far down the long perianth tube; it deepens on the fall to pure purple. The pollen is pale gold, and the median line starts of the same colour. It is much spattered with black along the claw, but presently it leaps out on to the blade of the fall, and glows with the most brilliant golden orange that can be imagined. Upon each side of this flaming "signal" the petal is white, splashed with purple-black. Such a thing could only be imitated in precious stones, and even they must lack its infinite delicacy and fragrance. The scent has been compared to violets, but there is an under-scent that belongs to reticulata alone. Of the varieties none, in my judgment, are equal to the type; indeed, no flower that blows is fairer in its fairy way than this gem from the Caucasus. Histrio has a scheme of fine lilac colour, darkening on the fall. Here the whole fabric is mottled, streaked, and splashed with rich lilac upon a white ground. Through the midst runs a thin yellow line, touched with black specks. The standards are narrow and bolt upright; the styles are large,

and break into irregular flakes at the crest. Both are of a paler colour than the fall. Brought into a warm room Histrio exudes sweetness, but appears to refuse its odour out-of-doors. All these little irises do very well in pots, though I cannot make them ripen so. Like the rest of the reticulata group, Histrio is a cheerful and beautiful flower. Grow a dozen for people who are in the habit of getting seedy and low-spirited at Christmas time; place these budding things beside your suffering friends, and the reward will be great.

Histrioides comes somewhat later than the last with me and much resembles it, but opens a larger flower. The standards have a graceful twist in them, and to the fall belongs a peculiarly lovely form; heart-shaped, and narrowing to a point. The crest is beautifully wavy, and the colouring matter passes a long way down the claw along the stem.

Iris Bakeriana is another early bird. I had one (potted) in bloom on New Year's day. The flower is a wonderful combination of two purples. The standards and styles are of the colour of the common violet; the falls are tipped, splashed, and streaked with the darkest velvety purple imaginable. This tint lies on a white ground, and the contrast is unique and lovely. The outside of the claw is striped with a paler tone of colour, and the middle line has a slight wash of yellow, but its tone is faint compared with the hue of the pollen, where the anther lies under its little style-cowl. The fruitful dust is a bright gold, and the iris is most fragrant. You shall meet no

more distinguished little flower in any February than this. It comes from the confines of Armenia, and Mr. Lynch says that the foliage often attains to a foot's length before it blooms. My cold frame specimen, however, stood up well above the spike of curious eight-sided leaves, but these grew swiftly after the flower had fallen. Herr Max Leichtlin chronicles a white form, which must be a very exquisite creature.

Iris Vartani is less known. It comes from near Nazareth, where Dr. Vartan found it, and is a combination of dull lavender and pale yellow. I have failed to flower it as yet.

Another Xiphion (though some say it belongs to the Juno group) is Mrs. Danford's wee golden iris from Mount Amascha. This is a pretty mite for pot work. The blossom is a fine yellow, with a few brown splashes on the fall. The standard for floral effect is non-existent, since nature has reduced it to a mere thread. Why?

So much for my Xiphions. To offer you pictures of these small people is hardly fair to them. Photography cannot reach or remotely suggest their charms.

The Juno group flower with the earlier xiphions and may next be named. In connection with iris sindjarensis, one murmurs "that blessed word Mesopotamia." Thence it comes, and its exquisite mingling of lavender and French grey produce a tender effect as of a dream flower. The falls are almost translucent and of the palest blue, touched with deeper tones along the edge, and marked by an

irregular upstanding median line of faint yellow. The style branches echo the mingled colours in a darker shade, and make a hood for the anthers. The pollen is white; the little standards drop abruptly between the falls, and add their own tint to the harmonious whole. Delicate lines mark their centres, and their lobes are fretted round the margins. The grace of this flower, half springing from and half nestling in the great green clasping leaves, is felt by every iris lover. The blossom, often four inches across, comes in March. A combination of this delicate thing with the purple and gold of reticulata, such as stands before me while I write, actually helps to soften the hard edges of life; and if you retort that the tribulation must be trifling to which a flower can minister, I must reply, with respect, that you are wrong, and have yet much to learn in the garden.

Best of this group I love the sea-green and purple of persica. In 1787 the figure of this lovely thing was given as the first plate of the historic *Botanical Magazine*, and to-day, when I open the volume, persica faces me as fresh as when her colours were first laid upon the engraved outline by a hand that must have been dust these many years. For accuracy of shades, the modern mechanical processes cannot stand for a moment beside the old hand-painted botanies. I fail to ripen this fine thing, and a year or two sees it decline in company with stenophylla (Heldreichii) and Sieheana (persica magna). All these flower from the ripe bulb once and only once. The comparatively new Tauri has flowered well with me, but whether

it will settle I know not. As the little soul comes from the Eastern Taurus, and prospers at an elevation of 6500 feet, its constitution ought to laugh at a west-country rockery. But our weeping atmosphere is against us. If I could smother Tauri in snow through three months of the year, he would doubtless be grateful. This iris is very handsome in the fashion of I. reticulata, and a splendid laster. Mr. Lynch gives it high praise, and I venture to do the like.

Another fairly new iris of the Juno company is Warleyensis, which flowers well with me; but I fail to find so much beauty in it as some report. With me the blossom cannot be said to have a white margin to the petals; the general tone is an indifferent purple, darkening on the blade of the fall, and having a median line and signal of feeble yellow. The form, however, even in my inferior specimens, is exceedingly distinguished and effective. It is a free flowerer, appearing after sindjarensis. From Eastern Bokhara it comes. Orchioides I blush to lack, and the new and choice Willmottiana, happily named after one of the greatest woman gardeners in England, is still that rare thing—an expensive iris. Rosenbachiana, too, makes the purse shut thoughtfully; but it is a very great iris, and Sir Michael Foster puts it, along with reticulata and alata, as among his favourites. Rosenbachiana, he says, is of striking beauty in its finer forms, but it varies much. At its best this must be a gorgeous thing of crimson, gold, and purple. "Expose to the sun, and shelter from

the wind," directs the great authority: a good rule that for all the Juno race.

Caucasica is also here, and with alata, the "scorpion iris," one may conclude the group. Perhaps this sole representative of a Western Juno is the loveliest of them all. The form is very fine, and the best colour a rich purple-blue, while on each fall flashes the orange "signal," like that little flame on a golden-crested wren's head. From October and onwards it blooms, but too surely passes away from rectitude after a year of my garden, and hides the lapse for a while in bunches of foliage innocent of flower. Would that we had the climate and the genius of the Dutch for these things! Junos laugh at cold, if only the summer has been of a sort to ripen them; but with me it seldom is. Devon, in fact, cannot be called a really good iris county, excepting for the moisture-lovers. From what I have seen, I would back the high and sandy ridges of Kent against any part of the United Kingdom for these flowers. The sustained cheapness of the noble family alone keeps me here struggling with them in the mud: because, while ripe bulbs are to be had at such trifling rates, it matters but little if they perish. Nothing suffers save a man's own horticultural self-respect.

The Hermodactylus group is represented, so far as I know, by iris tuberosa only. The "snake's head," or "little widow," prospers in half shade with me, and sends up a modest company of quiet blooms in March. The style-arms are delicate green; the standards are upright green threads folded in on

themselves, and the falls are also pale green, darkening to a rich velvety brown-black on the blade. The pollen is yellow, and the blossom seems to break out of the side of the green spathe-valve, which overtops it. These spathes are, by the way, double in my plants. Devon suits this Levantine flower well, and it increases rapidly if allowed to do so.

Another group of only one species is Gynandiris. and I believe Sisyrinchium is its sole representative. This is Parkinson's "Barbery nut," and Mr. Lynch records that he collected a variety, near Genoa, that was exceedingly charming and has fared well with him at Cambridge. My specimens came from Holland and prosper thus far. Their original habitat I know not, as there are several places from which they may have started. They make up for very fleeting flowers by abundance of them; but these need sunshine to make them expand, and if they reach the critical flowering-day without it, they perish untimely. The colour is a lovely lavender, with streak of yellow on median line of fall; a large white signal patch slightly spattered with the prevailing tint also distinguishes them. Stigmas and standards all spring up in a cluster in the midst, and the standards, which are delicately pointed, grow at right angles to the stem. The little thing is hardy, and some in my garden habitually throw double blooms with six of each part instead of three. For this, however, I do not commend them. Sisyrinchium is almost the least of the irises, yet a spritely blossom and quite worth growing.

If you do not like it after a fair trial, you can eat the bulb.

I now reach that rare and precious flower, I. nepalensis. My roots flowered during July, and I can therefore give you a picture of the blossom. Last year this dainty atom opened its eyes somewhere under the snow-line of the Himalayas; this year, with amazing amiability, it appears again in South Devon. What a staggering change of scene is here! It is a pity there was no I. Milesii out at the right moment to welcome the other mighty traveller. Nepalensis has a medium-sized flower of the softest and most dovelike silvery lavender. Falls and standards all droop daintily at the same angle, and in the midst spring up the fimbriated style-cowls. A good yellow-bearded crest runs far into each fall, and the petal about it is veined with the prevailing tint of lavender on white.[1] The bloom opens on a stem six inches long, and the sprightly foliage is about twelve inches high. Unhappily the flower is very fleeting, and my efforts to catch it and convey it to the photographer would win your admiration if I recorded them. Nepalensis opens not much before noon, and has usually vanished by half-past three o'clock; but you shall seek far to find anything more beautiful.

[1] Mr. Lynch specially praises the other variety of this species, which is called Colletii.

CHAPTER X

THE IRIS (*continued*)

IT pleased me not a little to see that the greatest living biologist, and one of the greatest living men, Professor Ernst Haeckel, quotes the iris amongst his examples of sensible loveliness. Under the head of actinal beauty (radial æsthetics) he shows how pleasure is excited by the orderly arrangement of three or more homogeneous, simple forms that radiate about a common centre; and he cites the four paramera in the body of a medusa, the five radial limbs of the star-fish, and the three counterpieces in an iris bloom. Beauty of order is apparent all through nature, and never more strikingly than in this disposal of nine in one—the three times three of the iris—with its six perianth segments and triple style-arms. In the matter of colours, also, the flower generally conforms to a great, if an old-fashioned, criterion of the beautiful. Burke held that the hues of lovely bodies "must not be dusky or muddy, but clean and fair." He doubted if colours should be of the strongest kind, but held that milder tones of "light greens, soft blues, weak whites, pink reds, and violets" were more appropriate. Since, however, strong and vivid hues could not be excluded from

the survey of any flora or tropic scene, he bargained that these high colours should be diversified, and the object never entirely dominated by one. The peacock's neck, the opal, the rainbow, and the rainbow-flower all answer to this test.

Let us now approach the great subject of cushion irises. An expert has said that when the oncocyclus group chanced to meet his eye in an English garden, he was reminded of the gladiatorial hail, "Morituri te salutant!" And indeed these wonderful things would usually seem to anticipate their own extinction and lift the fitful flower or aborted bud of farewell over their own graves. We do not understand them, and only a rare spirit here and there has succeeded in bringing them to perfection and providing the conditions they demand. But how great the reward! Their melancholy stateliness; their solitary habit; their size, and the magic of their colouring and forms, lift them above, not only all other irises, but all other flowers that I have ever seen outside a dream. They are to the garden what Chopin is to music. As he was a genius apart who, out of suffering, and an artist's joy that rose above suffering, poured forth magic of harmony and beauty to delight men's ears, and so intoxicated them with glory of sound that they often forgot the quivering nerve-centres of the human miracle who wrought them: so with these most wonderful, beautiful, and sad of flowers, we sometimes miss the spirit in them while overjoyed or overawed by the substance. Without foundering in the pathetic fallacy, I yet have always felt before cushion irises

IRIS NEPALENSIS.

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IRIS SUSIANA.

that I behold something more than a flower. Many men and women pass me by, or speak with me and eat with me, and both affect and teach me less. It is wrong, but it is true.

Take I. susiana, the great Turkey fleur-de-luce of old botanists. When first I saw it in the market-place at Toulon, I fancied that the women who sat beside the mossy fountain there were selling artificial blossoms of the sort that make hideous many French burying-places; but then I came nearer and found the veritable mourning flower of the Japanese—a huge iris, with petals that seemed woven of transparent crêpe. Sorrow is written in cryptic language on its delicate darkness: a fitting emblem of a nation's mourning, and worthy to rest on the coffin of saint or hero, is this sombre and solemn thing. As I write a specimen stands before me, that trembled into life yesterday to speak to the living of death. Its texture is a sable silvered. Like arches of little caverns, the style-arms with upturned crests bend over the anthers and open above each signal patch—black as a pall. Closely spattered with ebony are the falls, and between the interstices of this mottling run tiny lines of wine-purple. The hairs are black and widely scattered, not only over the fall but over the standards also. These standards spring gloriously up, and are densely embroidered with black on palest grey. The markings are finest and smallest along the median lines, then they increase in size, and finally stretch into a delicate, dark venation at the petal edge. The falls are five and a half inches high, and meet together

like wings brooding over the darkness within. Seen against the light, a wonderful pattern of network and splash that covers the whole flower will be found not black but purple—a red purple on the falls and style-arms, and a violet purple on the standards. No man has spoken a better word upon this iris than Parkinson, and none have so perfectly described the colour in a phrase. "The chief of all," he says, "is your Sable flower, so fit for a mourning habit that I thinke in the whole compasse of nature's store, there is not a more patheticall, or of greater correspondency, nor yet among all the flowers I know any one comming neare unto the colour of it." Elsewhere he says that it is of the hue "almost of a snake's skinne, it is so diversely spotted." The cast slough of a serpent is certainly a simile of genius for this extraordinary flower.

If susiana be the queen of irises, and fit adornment for the bosom of our loved dead, then Lorteti may be called king, and his brilliance, purity, and wonder are worthy to stand for an emblem of life and dawn. It is nearly as large as susiana, and I may struggle vainly to describe the amazing thing from the plant I figure. This, in its second year, has just given me five blossoms. Certainly it is the most beautiful flower I have ever seen, even in the tropics. The great standards are silvery white most delicately veined with purple; and the contrast of the falls is striking, for these have a groundwork of golden white or palest cream-colour, and are closely spattered with crimson, which deepens on the signal patch to darkest

IRIS LORTETI.

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IRIS KOROLKOWI.

crimson-brown. The style-branches match the falls, but are coloured a duller crimson, and the tint is spread in a wash rather than spatter. At the edge, however, they too are spattered; the median ridge lifts a little, and the style-crest is dotted like the falls, but much more minutely. Short reddish hairs lie in the throat under the pale yellow anther, and the fall, which is translucent, curves round under the flower, so that its wondrous beauty is somewhat lost. The standards bend together like fairy wings, and their claws are also crimson dotted.

From Lebanon comes this glorious flower, and there, on the roasting cliff-faces and far beneath the snowy peaks and precipices, it flourishes at a modest elevation of two thousand feet.

Iris Gatesii, another magnificent oncocyclus, is at home in Armenia, and is said to combine the qualities of susiana and Lorteti. The prevailing tone is a delicate grey; while in lupina, the "Wolf's Ear," another Armenian, the colour scheme is a combination of pale brown and yellow, producing an effect as of bright wolf fur. I have failed with these, but succeeded with I. iberica, a plant of great beauty. It varies much, the colour scheme tending to purples and crimson-purples. It comes from the Caucasus, and one may picture its loveliness at the feet of Prometheus, where he hung crucified against those eternal rocks in the awful noonday sun. Paradoxa has so far defied me also, but such an astonishing thing must be flowered at any cost of time and patience. "It is grotesquely beautiful," happily says

Mr. Lynch; and it may not be mistaken for any other iris that grows by virtue of its reduced fall and immense, veined standard. Parvar is a good hybrid raised by Sir Michael Foster between paradoxa and variegata. I have a stout and healthy plant of this. Ewbankiana, happily named after that great iris-grower, the late Rev. H. Ewbank, and acutiloba I do not know; but I would sooner possess the yellow urmiensis, which adds scent to its other distinctions. This comes from North-West Persia, and is still very rare.

Atrofusca bitterly disappointed me last season. This fine oncocyclus from the east side of Jordan threw a splendid bloom-spike, but I did something wrong, no doubt—too much water, or else too little probably—and it withered untimely away. A friend consoled me with a sight of atro-purpurea.

This oncocyclus had little of purple about it in the flower I beheld. The colour harmony was rather of rich sepia and gold. The falls were a deep, lustrous brown, and they darkened to a broad central spot of black that shone like velvet. The beard was yellow, each hair being tipped with black. The pollen showed pale corn-colour, and the style-arms changed their tint at the stigma from a gold shot with brown to the rich chocolate tone which dominated the entire blossom, and lent it a wonderful opulence and gloomy splendour. Like others of the clan, it simply killed any flower brought into contact with it.

The comparatively new nigricans I have flowered with success, and find it the darkest of all—as nearly

a black flower as I have seen. But it is the warm blackness of Indian ink, and, like others of this sort, has a touch of gold on the fall above the signal spot. Its spathe valves were beautifully and regularly reticulated with brown inside. Haynei is another new iris declared to be exceedingly beautiful; and Eggeri is yet another, though this has been in catalogues for some time. These are of the brown and gold character; but sofarana and Bismarkiana, both from the Lebanon mountains, are harmonies in purple. For the culture of these treasures you must go to Mr. Lynch, who chronicles many brilliant successes; but do not think a light task lies before you. Nothing in gardening is much more difficult, and a large patience under disappointments manifold will be necessary. Take this, however, for your comfort: Oncocyclus irises are exceedingly cheap. They must flourish abundantly somewhere, and increase at a generous rate. As to where you should go for them, that is a delicate question and not my business, yet I shall venture to name Mr. Robert Wallace of the far-famed Kilnfield Gardens, Colchester, in this connection, and advise you to start with the strong, ripe, and healthy rhizomes he can supply. Many of the Dutchmen also provide excellent material.

The Regelia group is small and select. It has been crossed successfully with Oncocyclus, and is certainly easier to grow. My plants—also from Kilnfield—flowered in their first year, and that abundantly. The superb Korolkowi is a Turkestan iris, and was first sent to his native country by the Russian General

Korolkow. Whether he happened to be a great soldier I know not; but he certainly contributed to the beauty of the garden world when he found this wonderful flower.

The shape of Korolkowi is exceedingly distinguished, and its contour reveals immense character. Some flowers are utterly tame, and have an almost inane expression, like the average sheep and many men and women. Not so an iris. Even my photograph indicates the forceful aspect of Korolkowi; but no black and white picture can give the silver-grey texture of petal or the exquisite colour of the venation. Falls and standards are of similar hue in some of my plants: the palest lavender white, or grey; and over both a purple net is thrown, that spreads from the median line and breaks into little branches toward the petal edge. The signal is purple-black, and from it, along each fall, there drop a few delicate parallel lines of a slightly darker hue than the surrounding reticulation. The beard is small and black, and the pollen, pale gold. The style-arms are short, purple-veined, and crested. There are several varieties of this species, and my picture answers to venosa. Violacea is not so beautiful to my mind, and the type has paler standards. This I lack, but it is probably the best of all.

Regelia Leichtlini might be called "Bluebeard," for the hairs, which occur on the standards as well as the falls, are richly tipped with azure. The flower has a fine habit and very neat shape, but is smaller and far less splendid every way than Korolkowi. The colour

IRIS FIMBRIATA JAPONICA.

UNIV. OF MICH.

IRIS REGELIA LEICHTLINI.

scheme is purple changing into delicate brown. A russet network covers every petal, but the effect is pallid as a whole. The variety Vaga Leichtlini I find a better thing, of much richer and finer colours. Regelias ask for care and summer roasting; but they are easier to manage than the cushion irises, and give you two flowers for their one. Thanks to Sir Michael Foster and Herr Tubergen, many splendid hybrids of Regelia and Oncocyclus are now in the market. Many of these have the grandeur of the latter with the twin flowers and comparatively strong constitution of Regelia. They are of course still costly.

Now for another splendid and select little family: that of Evansia. The subject is painful because it reminds me of the perfidy of the Dutch. You will remember their special little eccentricity in matters of commerce, but one nurseryman—he shall be nameless—arranged an ingenious variant of the rule. He did not give me too little and ask too much; but he asked too little and—gave me something different. Observing this impostor's price for Iris cristata, I lost no time in communicating with him. I think he wanted but a penny a root for this lovely crested iris from Maryland and Kentucky. My stock of Americans was pitifully low; therefore the more greedily I jumped at this attractive opportunity. You will guess the sequel. Instead of cristata's noble and unique lilac and gold, a mean and uninteresting hybrid of Germanica appeared. My ignorance and cupidity were well paid, for I ought to have suspected from the first; and I ought to have recognised the rhizones

sent as not belonging to cristata. I wrote and told my Dutchman that this was not the way to make a new customer his friend; he did not argue the question, but sent another catalogue!

The queen of the Evansia[1] section is, of course, fimbriata, or Chinensis, or japonica, the Chinese iris. This is a tender plant, but makes strong growth in a suitable situation, though I have not flowered it in the open ground. As a pot plant it is much to be commended, and flowers freely. Each lofty and delicate stem carries from ten to fifteen blossoms with me, but I seldom have more than three or four out simultaneously. It is a fleeting flower, and nothing can be much fairer than its delicate lavender petals all bending at the same angle from the perianth tube in a tender star of six rays. Not only are standard and fall most exquisitely fringed, but the uplifted style-branches break at their edges into a ragged turmoil of tiny filaments, and thin away at their margins into threads. The fretted edges and crimped crest make this flower even lovelier than our own wild water buck-bean or the villarsia. Fimbriata's standards are of a colour so faint and pure, that it seems a delicate shadow rather than a tint thrown upon the white texture of the petal; while over the falls, on a similar ground, there lie rings of richer purple, which spread into veins and die away on the blades. From the midst of these rings there flashes the rich orange "signal." The crest also is of brilliant yellow, with

[1] *Evansia.* So called after Mr. Evans of the India House, who introduced Iris fimbriata from China somewhat more than a hundred years ago.

a white fringe along it, and the spots of purple as they reach the gold turn to pale brown, then merge in the yellow. Seen through a magnifying-glass the work on the fall is infinitely beautiful, and one appreciates the actual texture of the bloom. Each petal then appears like a piece of frosted silver whereon the pigments have been laid in transparent washes. The flower is fragrant, and I think excites more enthusiasm than any iris I show to friends.

To see fimbriata in full loveliness one must go abroad. On the Italian Riviera it is a grand feature of the gardens, and I remember a bank in full flower where a thousand spikes and perhaps four thousand blossoms scented the sunshine of a March forenoon in Genoa. It is a precious sight in a formal garden sprawling along some marble-edged bed. I have indeed seen nothing more splendid in connection with architectural details. One is reminded at Genoa of what Landor says: "We Englishmen talk of planting a garden, the modern Italians and ancient Romans talk of building one." But surely perfection lies in combining the two theories: in building the garden first and planting it afterwards.

So far I can only admire Iris Milesii in my own garden for its immense bright green foliage and vigorous habit, but I recently visited the flower at Kew, where it does grandly in the open border, and found it a stately thing with plum-purple falls, a slight yellow crest, and handsome standards of a colour somewhat paler than the rest of the flower.

The late Frank Miles, artist of fair faces and lover of the garden, introduced it from the Himalayas.

Another Evansia is gracilipes, which I have quite failed to flower. This is a Japanese plant; and yet another from the same country is my favourite, tectorum—the roof iris—called also tomiolopha, "the jagged crest." It came to England in 1872, and began to find its way into gardens a year or two afterwards. The flower of tectorum is a beautiful true violet slightly mottled with darker colour. Not a suspicion of yellow marks it, but the falls have a wonderful frill, like our great-grandfathers' shirt-fronts, and this broken, laciniated fringe is spotted with purple—even as our great-grandfathers' also were sometimes after the second bottle. The pollen is white, the stigma branches stand up clear of the flower in the midst, and the standards are spoon-shaped, and grow at right angles to the stem. Very unusual grace and beauty mark this iris, and for those who love to link a flower to humanity there is the story about it from Japan, and the reason why the plant won its trivial name. Moderns say that tectorum is grown to strengthen the thatch in which it creeps and flourishes; but if we retrace our steps a more picturesque reason may be found. Once there was a famine in the land, and all things that could not be used for food were banished from the soil. On pain of grave penalty might a man plant that which would produce beauty only. But the iris of the jagged crest was stronger than necessity, and answered a higher law than hunger. It belonged to

IRIS TOMIOLOPHA (*TECTORUM*).

IRIS SIBIRICA.

fashion. The Japanese ladies used the powder of its roots to whiten their pretty faces, and enhance the brilliance of eyebrows, eyes, and mouths. Hunger, indeed, might have been trusted to rob their little cheeks of colour, but they could not face each other without this precious powder ; and the irises, banished from the garden, found their way to the roof. Doubtless, however, this is a legend, for the stories good enough to be true so seldom are.

CHAPTER XI

THE IRIS (*concluded*)

I DO hope and trust that a touch of soil is over all this little book. I should like it to appear in the words, as it actually does on the pages. If you could see the MS. you would often observe trails of red or black or brown colour, according to the medium of loam, or peat, or leaf mould in which I was grubbing when moved to rush and set things down. Sometimes yellow or scarlet pollen is smeared upon the folio. My typewriter forgives these things. Nothing dismays her—not even the botanical names as they appear in my writing. Let me thank her here for her invincible courage and amazing accuracy.

I am now come from digging about certain beardless irises, and shall immediately begin upon that subject. Sibirica needs no more than grateful mention. Its various purples, creams, and whites are invaluable. The iris is a marsh lover, but my clumps of half-a-dozen sorts thrive in a half-shady corner far from water, and get no more moisture than heaven sends them. They have, however, a mulch of ripe cow-manure every autumn; and upon this fare they increase in vigour yearly. A giant libertia flourishes along with them.

Perhaps unguicularis, or stylosa, as one more often calls it, is the queen of the beardless group. At any rate, I always think so at Christmas, when her lilac loveliness peeps from the grassy foliage. The great flat purple and gold, lavender and snow white of lævigata in July sometimes shakes this opinion, but, upon the whole, stylosa wins—if only from association. It was at my bedside in Algiers, when I suffered some transient danger of death from pneumonia, but secured a respite. Through the fever dreams of the time flowers ran riot. Stylosa smiled, but the grand strelitzias, which flourished in the hotel garden, took shape of huge birds, and with their wonderful beaks and orange-crimson crests strutted hither and thither ferociously. The camels of the Arabs shrank to the size of mice, and scurried in legions through my brain; the eternal bells rang and jangled old songs of home; all the thousand new ideas and impressions of colour, sound, scent, and form that North Africa had brought me broke loose at the beck of the fever fairies, and played havoc with the nightly struggle to sleep. A sinister turn marked these visions. My mind and body alike were soaked with the contagion of disease. The scent of olive wood and the name of Dr. Thompson cling also to memory when I think of the incident. Because olive wood burnt day and night beside me for a season; and Dr. Thompson, assisted by nature and science, brought me out of that peril in a manner very agreeable to us both. Another flower also I link with the occasion—that very splendid thing, Bougainvillæa spectabilis laterita.

Great sprays of this glorious plant, brought to my bedside in the hand of a friend, shone like a flame there, and helped convalescence with the joy it wakened. But stylosa was the second heroine of the comedy—the first, of course, being the Lady of my Garden, who nursed her stricken gardener back to normal conditions.

Then, once more afield, with a dust-dry, genial sirocco blowing, I went forth to find the iris of Algiers. There she was amid the dewy hedges of vineyards, her little heart touched with gold. She peeped about from secret places, tangled wastes, or the fierce arms of the prickly pear—that gigantic opuntia whose silver-grey lights every hillside about Algiers. The purest mauve she is—just deepening in tone on the fall where the yellow signal ends with a touch of orange. A delicious network of lavender and white lies on either side of the signal bar, and runs over it faintly. The standards are of the same pure lavender, touched to a richer note at the claw. To my nose the fragrance is exactly that of a bluebell. I can shut my eyes and see an English wood in spring. But when I open them again stylosa reminds me of her own home. I note whitewashed hovels scattered on a mighty hillside. They gleam like flowers there; and round about the wild olive climbs; vines, still naked, stick their tortuous branches from a sea of wild flowers; heather's snow and lavendula's purple dot the waste; and far beneath spread orange orchards ablaze with fruit. Crags of limestone sometimes break out against the russet and tawny earth, and the

IRIS STYLOSA.

IRIS STYLOSA ALBA

eternal silver-grey and silver-green of the trees and familiar, sun-resisting plants festoon each hill and drape each acclivity and slope. The tilled ground stretches in terraces and climbs in steps; sinks broadly to the valleys with wedges and squares of corn and vine; cuddles at the bottom of these terrific declivities, and marks by an added warmth of colour or luxuriance of foliage the presence of little water-courses that wind beneath them. Against the prevalent pallor of the wind-kissed olive, the cactus and aloe, the agave and the eucalyptus, is splashed deep green of citrons, and the acacias flame above. Far away the Djurdjura Mountains run south against the blue, and beyond them a spur of the Lesser Atlas lifts snow to the sun.

Stylosa alba is pure white with a tone of yellow-green at the claw. If you take a bird's-eye view of this iris, a beautiful six-rayed star appears. The guiding line of orange stops very abruptly on the fall in the midst of a silver-white expanse of petal. It is a little stiffer in form than the type, and with me it seems more shy of blooming.[1] My clump of stylosa has increased immensely in a soil much like that of its home; and still I prefer the delicate native plant before those various larger and richer-coloured garden sorts now commonly to be met with. Nothing rejoices a flower-lover more than a dozen buds of stylosa picked the day before blooming, and despatched

[1] *Stylosa alba.* I did not find this iris wild: it is very rare in that state. But I had the pleasure of meeting its original discoverer, an English resident, who has a beautiful garden at Mustapha Supérieur.

with a little damp cotton-wool to keep their heads cool in the post. Conveyed thus, they travel perfectly, and tremble out into life and sweetness immediately on arrival.

Iris graminea springs very neatly amid its bright grass-like foliage. The flower is rather dominated by the size of its great plum-coloured style-arms. These are much in evidence, and, with the neat, narrow standards, are of a rich purple-red, that deepens to pure purple on the crests and along the central line. The falls are lilac, streaked on white and touched with pale yellow, but towards the claw they partake of the prevailing colour of the flower. The pollen is like gold dust. My variety appears to be scentless; but the older botanists credit graminea with a plum-like odour, as well as colour. It may be so, for my nose is not as swift after subtleties as I could wish, and often misses a delicate and exquisite odour that makes other people quite enthusiastic. This Austrian iris is bright and shapely, but fleeting. There is no hardier plant, and slugs seem not to like it as much as most of the tribe.

That grand iris, fulva, is too rarely found, but once seen usually acquired. It must have moisture, however. The colour is a rich copper-red, quite unlike any other member of the family. The anthers, with cream-coloured pollen, extend beyond the style-arms; the flower is flat, and the falls and standards make a star of alternate large and small petals. Fulva grows with lævigata, and prospers under like conditions in my little bog garden. It is a distinguished iris from the United States.

American irises in general are as beardless as Red Indians. Upon the whole, they are not too easy to grow. Macrosiphon and Hartwegi and Douglasiana from California; tenax from British Columbia; Missouriensis from the Rockies; Hookeri and virginica from Canada, and others, including the plant I. verna, which may be, or may not be, an apogon, all, I think, require moist peat and shade and careful culture. My results with them leave no loophole for enthusiasm so far; but on behalf of "Tol-long," a very charming and easily-grown hybrid, I should like to know if a difference between Missouriensis and Tolmieana does or does not exist. Longipetala is one parent, at any rate, and may be proud of a dainty child. Tol-long is bright lavender, with the habit of longipetala, narrow, upright standards, small style-arms, and falls streaked with the prevailing fine lavender colour on a white ground. A signal of pale lemon fades away on the fall, and completes a very delicate and graceful study. It is a vigorous iris, and the flowers often come out so swiftly that we may see two on a stem together. Verna, from the Southern States, must be a very lovely iris, but so far I have not flowered it. It grew into a large plant on our red earth, then began to perish. Now, in a lily bed of peat, where the spot is cool and in half shade, it looks healthier and well content.

The native English irises, the golden Pseudacorus and the lead-coloured fœtidissima, are exceedingly common wild flowers in Devon, and having them within a walk of my garden, it is not necessary that

they should dwell therein; but our "gladwin," with its strange smell, splendid dark foliage, and glorious scarlet corals of fruit in autumn, has always appealed to me as a fellow-Devonian, and I have wondered whether culture and crossing with other apogons might not produce something that should possess a finer bloom than fœtidissima, and yet retain its unique and brilliant fruit. Of course, I knew that what mortal man could do in this matter had indubitably been done, and accordingly wrote to Sir Michael Foster. As I suspected, he had made exhaustive experiments, but, so far, without any very encouraging results. He tells me that for years he has worked with fœtidissima, using the pollen of spuria, Monnieri, aurea, ochroleuca, sibirica, and others. Seeds have appeared in some cases; but very few germinated. Two, however, actually flowered, and they showed no trace of anything but their mother. Here appears a sort of partheno-genesis excited by the pollen, though the pollen did not actually enter into the embryo. "This," says Sir Michael, "may seem heresy, but there are facts recently observed in animals, as well as plants, which lend it some support." He continues, "I believe I. fœtidissima to be a very ancient archaic iris. It has a wide geographical distribution, and yet varies very little—and then only in colour (which is a trifle) and in size. Its characters, from its great age, are so deeply stamped on it that it will not, like the *parvenus* (pallida, &c. &c.), take to foreign pollen." He urges further experiments, and characteristically remarks, "There

IRIS FULVA.

IRIS DELAVAYI.

are few things that are impossible." There is thus a field unconquered, and we may yet see an iris with the grand fruit of our native and a great bloom as well. Not that fœtidissima is ugly to the iris-loving eye. The colours are quiet, but the bloom is very shapely. A yellow variety occurs in Dorsetshire.

I continue to experiment with the grand family of lævigata, or Kæmpferi, and am not yet absolutely satisfied as to the best place for them. There are dozens of desirable forms, and I wish I had an acre of them. Good bog earth, but not absolute marsh, may be the best treatment. On the other hand, I understand that lævigata thrives nobly in a foot of water.

Iris aurea, for some obscure reason, is a shy flowerer with me, but his kinsman, Monnieri, does well, and opens grand bright yellow blooms in June. The hybrid "Monspur"—a child of Monnieri and spuria—I also have; but the plants are young, and I must look in other gardens for this showy iris until next year. Spuria is not a beauty, but the apogon, Delavayi, should win some enthusiasm, and is still rare in cultivation. I have had the good luck to flower it, treated like lævigata, and can report a very beautiful, rich violet iris with the habit of sibirica but a much larger bloom. The whole plant is one colour, but on the lip of the fall occurs a spatter of pure white running under the style-branches. The fall is very long and gracefully shaped, the standards are narrow and nearly upright. Delavayi stands on a hollow three-foot stem, and comes from

Yunnan in China. It is a desirable plant, but demands copious moisture. Mine grows with his feet actually in the water.

The white and cream-yellow pyramids of I. orientalis need merely be mentioned. This great iris rises five feet high, and is a pleasant sight in my bog basin during June. This year, when I counted upon a worthy picture, it was shy and bloomed but sparingly, though, as a rule, I have thirty to forty spikes in flower together upon it. The giant variety of orientalis is said to go six feet high, and must be a great spectacle when well established. The plant is more often called ochroleuca, and it comes from Syria.

Iris Grant-Duffii, I think, suffers under its rather trying name, and is a shy flowerer, while tenax also fails here—from my fault, probably, rather than its own. Now, in wet peat, it is promising well.

I keep the great family of the bearded irises until the last. It is the largest of all, and, upon the whole, the easiest to grow. Pumila comes first, and late March generally brings the first dwarf purples, while the yellows, lilacs, and that curious silver-grey pumila, known as "gracilis," follow swiftly. With me they increase and thrive on a ledge of my white rockery. The flowers need no special description, but are all pretty. The variety Italica blooms with me at the same time as the dwarfer sorts. I gathered fine plants of it one March in North Italy, where its purple spattered a little conduit upon the side of a hill. Round about spread undergrowth of rosemary,

myrtle, and mastic.[1] The stones were plastered with moss and starred with rosettes of a mountain saxifrage; from the mottled chestnut-leaves that strewed the ground, there sprang pale crocuses, each with a drop of red gold within. Far below, rounded to a cup so seen, there spread great plains of olive, and old grey mills dotted upon them, with tracts of red earth and dark cypress spires that struck perpendicular rows and splashes upon the scene and sprang dark from the pallor of the prevalent foliage. On either side of the mountain rolled the Mediterranean, and small towns clustered upon her margins, like bright shells scattered along the edge of the blue, while Corsica floated, like a dream island, on the lofty horizon of the sea. Grand silence dwelt upon those southern slopes, and through it, felt rather than heard, came the whisper of bells that rang far away. Beyond the misty glories of Italy outspread, earth faded and a white diadem of mountains rose. They ascended into huge sunny vapours that rolled down upon them, until one might not separate shed and unshed snows against the eternal blue that reigned above both. It was a good home for Italica, yet she left it with me, and in a large spirit of contentment put forth rich purple blossoms in her

[1] *Mastic.* The lentiscus, or pistacia, is a feature of Riviera flora. Martial recommends the wood for toothpicks. There is a drink made from the gum, which I once tried at Tripoli, in Syria, and remember as being violently nasty. The liquor was colourless, but curdled on water being added to it. No doubt mastic is an acquired taste, like every intoxicant. This gum has always been drunk or chewed in the East, and our "masticate" of course comes from the same Greek word.

prison here when the next season for blooming came. She dwelt beside a wild and reckless aqueduct, which my lady and I followed for an adventurous mile or two, until it leapt out on to a little precipice and defied us.

Italica is a variety of the pumila, Chamæiris, and another variety is olbiensis—a plant offered in various colours by the nurserymen. From Mr. Wallace I have an exceedingly pretty variety of rich yellow with a spatter of purple on the fall. Meda is another fine, fragrant pumila which I lack. Mr. Lynch speaks highly of it.

Next we may take the two-flowered pogons; and of these one appears with the pumilas. Lutescens will appeal to those who love a delicate colour harmony. It bears twin blooms on a twelve-inch stalk; and the standards, which are cream-coloured, curl over each other in a very dainty fashion. Their claws are veined with pale purple, and the style-arms peep between. The pollen of lutescens is white, and the filaments a delicate purple. The beard of this iris is tipped with yellow, and it extends an inch on to the fall; while the fall itself is traversed by delicate veins of purple-brown, which begin sharply defined and pale away over the surface of the petals. The plant came to me as a pumila, but soon showed it was sailing under false colours. Thereupon I marched it off to a gravel path and planted it there. The edge of a gravel path, by the way, is an excellent place for hardy rhizomatous irises; and if you can borrow a steam-roller to plant them with, so

GROUP OF IRIS GERMANICA.

IRIS "MADAME CHEREAU."

much the better will be your results. The oncocyclus group should have the ground simply hammered round them if they are to succeed in any degree at all.

I am badly off for the two-flowered bearded race, and, in addition to lutescens, possess only arenaria, atroviolacea and flavissima. Perhaps it is as well that I have no more, for none of these prosper with me except the splendid scented atroviolacea, and the pall of silence may envelop the rest. The entire group must be tackled again in a humbler spirit.

From these inexcusable failures I turn to another great company of bearded irises, and with the Germanicæ strive to gain my self-respect. Of them I have good store. The familiar germanica proper may be first dismissed with a smile, and its richer and grander variety, asiatica, with a blessing. This latter plant is a noble, free-flowering iris, well worthy of a good place. Perhaps the rarest in cultivation is Bartoni, for which I have to thank Mr. Lynch of Cambridge. It is a pale yellow, mottled with pale purple, after the fashion of lutescens; and a special feature are the pure white triple stars of the style-branches in the heart of the flower. This flag, which comes from Kandahar, is beautiful and fragrant. Iris flavescens of this group is a fine lemon or butter colour, and a kindly, free-flowering plant. Just a touch of brown about the claw of the fall spoils the perfect purity of my plants, but this is scarcely to be noticed. Flavescens and germanica sometimes come together and make a grand contrast.

As a rule, however, the yellow flower is later. But never mix irises when cut. A few spikes of one sort together will please you best. Flavescens comes from Armenia, and that fine iris, sambucina, of the elder scent, is a compatriot.

Neglecta—a very free flowerer—is said to be a hybrid between sambucina and variegata. It has lavender standards and style-arms, and a handsome fall of very rich purple-red streaked on a white ground.

But the noblest of the clan, to my mind, is Iris hybrida, or amœna, as it is very often named. This is exceedingly distinguished, and the almost invariable pure white standards and style-arms, rising above the grand purple or white and lavender falls, make a remarkable contrast. Few things are lovelier than a good group of "Thorbeck" or "Mrs. H. Darwin." To my own taste, hybrida is easily first among the great company of the Germanicæ. Biliotti must also be very good, and cypriana is declared to be very lovely. I have this great iris from Cyprus, but as yet it has not flowered with me. Squalens I do not admire. This fact, however, it has survived, and is very often to be met with.

Perhaps the most popular group of all these irises is that of the Pallidæ. To them belongs the favourite Florentina — precious above ground for its snowy beauties, touched with the least possible trace of pearl-blue upon the fall; and below ground for those plump rhizomes from which the fragrant powder of orris is manufactured. Desfontaines found it in Algiers on graves; and I met with the pure white

variety of Florentina, named albicans, in a similar position round about Jaffa. There, wandering by the seashore, I came upon a ruined Mussulman cemetery, netted from end to end with acres of irises. Crooked and shattered, the tombstones stuck from their green expanse. The time was January, and no flower showed; but I ventured to remove a few rhizomes, and with the spring of the following year they flowered freely. This is a lovely iris of purest white; though it has the yellow beard of its class. A pigment called verdelis, or iris-green, was made from the flowers of Florentina, but I know not if artists use it nowadays.

Iris Swertii is perhaps the least often seen of this group. In delicacy of colouring it resembles plicata, but has a rosy tinge in the lavender tone peculiarly its own. It stands two feet high and flowers freely. The falls and standards are white, touched with warm but delicate rosy-lavender along the petal edges. The beard is yellow in the throat and white upon the fall; the style-arms take the colour intensified, and are exceedingly beautiful of tint. The Pallidæ are a small and select party, but in the remaining varieties of it, viz. plicata and pallida proper, much has been done by hybridising. Pallida, the pale flag, was known as the Dalmatian iris. The flower is large and of a soft and beautiful lilac tending to blue. A feature to reckon with is the shrivelled, dried-up spathe-valves. These perish before flowering, and when first I came as an innocent to gardening, I was horrified to see a fine spike of pallida apparently dying

before my eyes. Soon, however, the great flowers laughed out of their withered wrappings, and I learned what "scarious" meant. The foliage of this iris is magnificent, and of a fine glaucous green. At home it climbs the Atlas Mountains to the height of 7000 feet. There are many fine hybrids, of which I have two—"Queen of May" and "Céleste." The first is nearer true pink than any iris I have seen; the second is a large and splendid flower of loveliest lavender. With me this beautiful race does not blossom so freely as many of their bearded kinsmen; but when once a flower-spike appears, it gives a most generous display.

There remains plicata to mention. Mr. Lynch tells us that this wonderful iris is only known in cultivation, and Sir Michael Foster suspects that it is a cross between Iris sambucina and the last named. The varieties are very beautiful, and "Madame Chereau" is the best of them. She is white, with a regular pattern of little parallel purple veins along the petal edge of standard and fall. Sometimes these do not go all round. "Gazelle" is another fine thing, and very free-flowering. The markings are of a darker shade of purple, and not arranged with the great distinction of "Madame." The beards of these irises are slightly touched with yellow, and the pollen is white. I have one beautiful pale form, merely tinted with colour, of which I do not know the name.

We may now devote a moment to the group known as Variegatæ. It embraces Cengialti, aphylla, lurida

variegata proper and others, and I am not too well off in them, though there are few finer sights in iris circles than the spectacle of a hundred good heads of variegata's barbaric gold and crimson displayed under the sun. The standards and style-arms are a fine, rich lemon yellow; the beard is also yellow, and the fall white and most boldly veined with crimson or crimson-brown. No iris has a more striking system of venation. A few straight lines run parallel from the tip of the beard to the lip of the fall, and from them broad, bold curves of colour bend away to right and left, overrun the petal, and merge into a mass along its lower edge. Great fragrance is a virtue of this noble iris, and there are many fine-named garden forms of it. Not a few of these are even more striking than the type. You should secure "Gracchus," "Rigolette," and "Malvina"—the last a beautiful thing with orange-coloured standards and falls veined and splashed with sepia. Variegata is a common wilding in mid-Europe.

Iris lurida is not a favourite of mine, but benacencis, which I do not know, must be a lovely addition to the group.

So much for irises. I have not mentioned half the known varieties of these precious plants; but if your enthusiasm wakens, it is well. Then I shall feel that we have not dawdled for three chapters with the rainbow-flower in vain.

CHAPTER XII

THE POND

I LATELY read a rather remarkable gardening book, and the impressions that it has left on my mind are high bamboos and still higher moral principles. The bamboos were photographed, the principles adorned the letterpress. There were little bits of good gardening let into the mass of the work, like precious stones set in lead. We were entertained by endless discussions on ethics, and the symposium was supported by an earnest clergyman and a well-meaning but inefficient agnostic. Above them sat the author in his character of Solomon. He spoke the magisterial word and calmed the angry passions of the combatants. He was always right, and always pompous. He must be a wonderful man, but perhaps lacking enough sense of humour to keep his prodigious intellect sweet. These perfect people make me irreverent. I long to say wild, improper things before them, that they may be shocked and scared. I long to see them faced with some everyday catastrophe—say, a bad egg at breakfast. I would go far to watch this bamboo owner running after his hat in a gale of wind, and see if his ethic stood the strain. I expect his bamboos catch his spirit, and wave with sublime

airs over the local vegetation. One rather wishes they would all flower, and so perish, and leave a gaping void. Yet that is a wicked wish, and I should be the first to regret it if the thing really happened.

We take ourselves too seriously; our neighbours not seriously enough. This I believe to be true of life, and it is also true of gardens. Too often I have felt scornful of other gardens, and too often my neighbours have scoffed at mine. Behind my back they call my compound a 'stuffy little nursery,' and I speak of theirs lightly as howling wildernesses. This is wrong and unkind. We must give and take in visiting other people's gardens, and try to see from the standpoint of the owners. The motive is everything. Some men merely garden for health. In that case, you must look at the gardener rather than the garden, to see whether his end has been attained.

If we are to be sane and contented and possible company for our kind, a toy is necessary to each one of us. A garden is a very good toy, and, as in the case of sportsmen, one destroys nature's rarest and most ferocious creations at the cost to himself of perhaps fifty pounds a head, while another, quite as keen, has to be content with an annual fortnight among the partridges; so in gardening, one man may play with everything that grows, and keep fifty gardeners to look after them, while another is reduced to a window-garden up three flights of steps.

Most of our gardens lie between these extremes; but if the thing were practicable I would plant pine-

tums for posterity, and do my gardening in the grand manner. I would secure half a county, and plan forests, lakes, islands in the lakes, and marble temples to Ceres and Pomona on the islands. I would emulate the princes of the ancient time, and my garden should resemble those classic and stately plantations of the past, wherein "noble spirits contented not themselves with trees, but by the attendance of aviaries, fishponds, and all variety of animals; they made their gardens the epitome of the earth, and some resemblance of the secular shows of old."

One cannot cram the epitome of the earth into an acre, but birds, beasts, and even reptiles occur in my garden from time to time. The little pond is the centre of fascination for most of them. Here the human boy shall be found harassing the newts and water-man beetles, and the human girl also appears, to the discomfort of dragon-flies and dismay of water-snails. My higher vertebrates are, however, better treated under the chapter devoted to garden pests.

Of respectable wild beasts the hedgehog occurs. He goes his nightly rounds and, I think, does good according to his lights. If we meet, as sometimes happens, in the dusk, he salaams very respectfully, bows his head down between his paws, and remains motionless in that somewhat servile attitude until I have passed by. Squirrels cross my garden constantly, with that little undulating run of theirs; but they do not stay, as I have nothing to offer them. Field-mice, on the contrary, are very fond of half-hardy

Cape bulbs—with a fondness different to mine. They build their nests in the rockeries, and have to be destroyed. Frogs, toads, and newts all increase and multiply here and are encouraged; and once I saw a large grass-snake apparently regarding a water-lily, but he poured himself away, like a little stream of amber and silver, among my marsh irises and never appeared again. Dogs enter, though not by invitation. The large dogs stroll round in a gentlemanly way and work no harm; the smaller sorts do evil, and tear and scratch and refuse to keep to the paths. When discovered, they bark insolently to hide their own uneasiness, and dash about over the borders and lose their heads, and forget how they got in. There is little use for a dog or a cat in a garden, though a cat certainly occurs here. His name is "Gaffer," and he is a brindled or tabbied beast of courteous disposition but colourless character. He does neither harm nor good. I have heard of him that he once caught a young thrush, who was sitting with his back turned waiting for his mother; but even that is in the nature of legend.

We count the usual birds, but only a few have ever called for any special admiration. A pair of missel-thrushes, with very great judgment, built their nest in a large araucaria imbricata. From this lofty point they commanded the situation; and to see them dash out if any jay or jackdaw dared even to pass by, was an amusing sight. With harsh invective they would flash from their nest like brown arrows, and flicker about the intruder and scream their indignation until

he was far away. Then they flew back, talked together about the dreadful characters there are in the world, cooled down gradually, and so returned to their young. No watch-dogs were ever more energetic or more fierce. Jackdaws fled before them, and when they came down to the lawn for food, even blackbirds, who hesitate not to send the ordinary thrush about his business, raised no sort of argument with them. They reared a brood of two, and the party quickly disappeared.

Our champion visitor, however, was a kingfisher. What possessed this distinguished fowl to visit us I never could understand. I suppose that he knew the place for a "resort," and fancied a change from the seclusion of Dart or Teign rivers. He came in December and stayed a fortnight. The goldfish held indignation meetings—in deep water—but he caught a good many, and they suited him well. To study his methods was exceedingly instructive. He sat on arundo donex at first, but it was not quite convenient, and so I arranged a stick for him hanging over the pond. From this point he enjoyed excellent sport. Suddenly, like a gem falling, he would drop with a splash and then return ashore—a young goldfish in his beak. My daughter sided with the fish, while I ranged myself beside the fisher. She hated death, as the young will, with all her might, and told me that it was a cruel and abominable thing that these fish, in the security of their home, should thus be cut off by a ferocious murderer. I explained that kingfishers were much rarer and lovelier and more interesting

than any gold carp whatsoever;[1] and I added that we might get plenty more goldfish for twopence each, whereas another kingfisher could hardly be hoped for. She answered that to buy more goldfish might be all right from my point of view, but would not prove the least comfort to those that the bird had eaten, and very likely not much to those he had left. This, in its small way, was true; but I dwelt on the laws of hospitality, explained that the kingfisher must live, and also made it clear that life for him inevitably meant death for something else. In reply she argued that I had never asked the kingfisher, that he came without an invitation, and that I owed no obligation to anybody who broke this first and simple law of society. To come and stop with people unasked struck my daughter as the unpardonable sin. Indeed, she has not forgiven the kingfisher unto this day. At the end of his fortnight he went as he had come, sans ceremony. I hoped when winter returned that he might pay me a second visit, but he did not do so. Probably, when the novelty has worn off, goldfish are a poor substitute for trout.

As to the pond he honoured, it lies in a wide semicircle and contains water-lilies — white, rose, carmine, pink, and cream colour — each with a wonderful jewel of wrought gold in her heart. The space admits of a small selection only, and where

[1] *Gold carp.* This is open to dispute. The Japanese fancy carps are as dainty and exquisite in their colours and fairy-like shapes as anything to be seen in Nature. They are, however, exceedingly tender.

circumstances limit one to six or eight, I would venture to advise the following:

Nymphæa Marliacea Albida is a strong, very free-flowering, water-lily of purest white with rich green foliage. Few are hardier or handsomer. N. Marliacea Carnea resembles Albida in every particular, but the outer petals are delicately touched with pale rose. These two hybrids, raised by Monsieur Latour-Marliac, may be heartily commended for their strength and beauty. Next, I would suggest that grand American water-lily, N. "James Brydon." This came to me from Philadelphia, and immediately set to work with true Yankee pluck and energy. It is a gorgeous carmine-crimson, with a heart of red-gold and very distinctive rounded petals. I keep it in a little tank alone, for its vigour is gigantic. It was in flower six weeks after its journey across the Atlantic; and "William Doogue," another splendid and massive pink water-lily raised in the United States, came with it, and blossomed in two months from planting.

I may say here that, in my experience, hardy nymphæas raised in America are stronger and healthier and every way better than those to be got in England or from France. This may seem a bold thing to declare, but I have proved the fact to my own satisfaction—not only with the two lilies above named, which are, perhaps, unusually vigorous hybrids, but also with other familiar species, such as the little dainty N. tetragona Helvola and the great familiar N. odorata. These things have all

NYMPHÆA MARLIACEA ALBIDA CARNEA.

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NYMPHÆA LAYDEKERI PURPURATA

surprised me in their first season by the vigour of their growth. It may of course be the sea-voyage, but I rather think Mr. Henry A. Dreer, of Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, U.S.A., would not agree with me. At any rate, in justice to the finest and most successful grower of all aquatics that I know, he must be named here; and I strongly advise those who want grand water-lilies to seek his catalogue.

Nymphæa Laydekeri purpurata is a very free-flowering French hybrid of dazzling carmine or rosy crimson with a golden centre. I note a curious fact about it. The first flowers, which come abundantly in early May with me, are of a shade quite different to those that follow. They appear the tenderest pink, and suggest something quite fragile and tropical of the lotus type; then, as the season advances, their character changes. This is a hardy water-lily, and you should not be without it. Another less vigorous plant, of a different pink tending to rosy vermilion rather than carmine, is the beautiful N. lucida, with large star-shaped flowers and foliage mottled purple-bronze. N. Odorata Caroliniana is also a true salmon-pink.

Of yellow water-lilies I have but two, the dainty little N. tetragona Helvola, already named, and the large N. Odorata Sulphurea. They are of the same colour—a pale sulphur yellow. The first is too small in all its parts to hold its own among the big species, and should have a little tank to itself with that white pearl, N. tetragona (or Pygmæa), as a companion. N. Sulphurea is hardy, and of large size and most

delicate and beautiful colouring. It flowers on into October with me. I have yet to grow a real bright yellow water-lily. Perhaps N. chrysantha would meet the case, or the apricot-tinted "Aurora."

I only mention these, because my very small experience does not extend beyond them; but all are good, hearty things with fine constitutions.

Of other aquatics which float or stand anchored among my water-lilies, I may mention the frog-bit —hydrocharis morsus ranæ; menyanthes trifoliata— the buck-bean — loveliest of native flowers; and villarsia nymphæoides — a very beautiful yellow blossom, fringed somewhat like the buck-bean, and rising three inches above its flat, heart-shaped leaves. Elsewhere, orontium aquaticum, or golden club, prospers and spreads foliage of the most lovely mingled greens upon the pond. From these spring his brilliant but trifling yellow flower-spikes in June. Myriophyllum spicatum pursues its uneventful way, for the most part submerged; and potamogeton crispus, I regret to say, is still with me, although I have tried for three years to expel him. In a weak moment, attracted by his beauty, I gathered a strong runner or two and made him free of my pond. But he abused this kindness, and now I pull out many yards of him every year, yet cannot eradicate his crimped purple streamers. Another hardy Briton—stratiotes aloides, the water soldier—fired by the example of potamogeton, prepared to emulate him and fill my long-suffering puddle from end to end; but I dealt with him in

GROUP OF CUT WATER LILIES.

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SPIRÆA GIGANTEA.

time, and he has vanished. Anacharis alsinastrum from Canada must also be avoided. It will speedily become a pest, and give pleasure to nothing but your water-snails. Of other foreigners I have pontederia cordata, which was sent to me by a friend from America. One cannot look a gift plant in the flower, but the blue inflorescence of this pickerel weed leaves me cold. It is an excellent thing—to receive from a friend, but not to purchase. Thalia dealbata is handsomer, though perhaps not so hardy. Sagittaria variabilis is a beautiful aquatic, and increases rather too rapidly with me. It thrusts its arrow-shaped foliage and panicles of white-petalled, golden-anthered flowers from two feet of water, or out of the mud at the pond edge, indifferently. Sagittaria Montevidensis is more beautiful still, but not so strong. This has a dark crimson patch on each of the three petals. Scirpus zabrina must go. He is handsome, but takes up too much room; while eulalia zabrina in the marsh hard by is choking my marsh irises, and will also have to be despatched elsewhere. The various meadow-sweets also under conditions of moisture soon get out of hand. Observe Spiræa gigantea. He comes from Siberia, but I doubt if he goes ten feet high there. S. venusta, S. palmata, and S. palmata elegans are all good. Astilbe rivularis must be dragged off to a less luxurious position; but A. Davidi is worthy of a good place. Gillenia trifoliata, too, prospers with the spiræas. Of reed-maces, typha angustifolia is mine. It prospers well, flowers freely, and does not interfere with its neighbours over much,

though I pull out a good deal each autumn. Those tiny and beautiful floating aquatics, azolla and salvinia, are not hardy, and must be preserved and propagated under glass, though they do well out of doors in summer. From these to the mighty arundo donax[1] is a far cry. The great reed does well in my marsh, and increases steadily but has not flowered. Its foliage rises above a large plant of caladium esculentum, and the contrast between the glaucous green of the reed and the mingled velvety tones of the elephant's ear is very beautiful. Here also prosper myrica gale, a native thing of delicious fragrance, and various plants of mimulus, including M. cuprea. The slipper flower grows here too; and there were true lilies once—canadense and superbum—but they have departed for the moment.

I have grown most known lilies in my time, but of late the iris has occupied my first affection, and lilies are just now very low with me. I get an

[1] *Arundo Donax.* Humboldt marks three stages of civilisation by the use men make of the Great Reed. First, in the days of palæolithic man, it serves for the spear-haft and the shaft of arrows; next, the pastoral age saw shepherds playing on the pipe of Pan; while thirdly, when agriculture came to be understood and developed, the great reed made baskets for the fruits of the earth, and trellises for growing of vine and gourd. A fourth use, higher than all these, belongs to our own arundo pragmites. Not only for warfare, music, agriculture, and thatching did the early men employ arundo. It was busy at the dawn of books, and the first pens used by our forefathers were cut from it. Merlin wrote his verses with the reed; Gildas, father of all British history, assaulted the Saxon invaders of his country with such a weapon; though the pen was not mightier than the sword in the sixth century. When I see an English reed-rond, mark the purple feathers swaying, and hear the silky, sleepy music of a thousand blades caressed by the wind and each other, I always think of the first Saxon pen and the learned clerk sharpening it.

annual box of L. auratum at one of the famous autumn auction sales of Mr. Stevens. For a modest sovereign or so one can replenish the garden with this absolutely necessary lily. I have never really established it, and will not pretend to a success I covet. Auratum always deteriorates with me in my peat-beds. Auratum rubro vittatum and A. platyphyllum are, however, at once hardier and grander than the type. The unspotted A. Wittei is very beautiful also. A. virginale is not unspotted, as the name implies. My favourite lily continues to be L. giganteum; but this year, though I particularly wanted a good bloom-spike for my book, only one appeared from the bed, and that but small. Other lily disasters also overtook me. I had a grand L. Henryi coming on with no less than twenty-five fine buds on the spike. Never did I see such a promising thing; but for some reason, hidden from me, Nature lost her temper on the night of August 3rd, and blew a whole gale out of the south-west. The havoc was terrific, and among the many sufferers I found L. Henryi with his head off and his year's work rendered futile. I grow hydrangeas on standards, and poor paniculata was stricken hip and thigh. Great trusses of snowy bloom lay scattered all over the garden.

So much has been said about the lily, and such wisdom uttered by professional gardeners, that it would be vanity for me to add any word. To name but one: Miss Jekyll's lovely book cannot have escaped you. My favourites, after L. gigan-

teum, are L. Sulphureum, his neighbour from the Himalayas—a very glorious flower when prosperous; L. Japonicum Colchesterense; L. auratum Wittei; L. Brownii; L. Thunbergianum "Van Houttei"; L. Umbellatum "Cloth of Gold"; L. Pardalinum—the type; L. Speciosum Album "Kraetzeri"—stronger and more beautiful than the type; L. Rubellum; L. Krameri; L. Colchicum (Szovitsianum); L. Batemanniæ; L. candidum; L. Washingtonianum—a very beautiful fragrant lily, with white, purple-spotted petals that fade to pink; L. testaceum, the sweet, nankeen-coloured, natural hybrid between candidum and a scarlet martagon; and L. martagon album.

Among new lilies, I care not for any of the gardener's hybrids, unless it be "Marhan"; but L. Bakerianum, a species from Burma, is very beautiful. She has most delicate yellow petals tinged with green, spotted with purple, and of a lovely shape.

Start with this little bunch and you will inevitably proceed to the rest. The late Dr. Wallace's handbook on lilies taught me a great deal about them. It is full of practical advice collected by that famous horticulturist.

Another good English plant used to grow beside my pond, but I have lost it now. This is butomus umbellatus, the marsh gladiolus, as it is called for some obscure reason. It should be planted in mud to prosper, and under those circumstances opens its clusters of pink flowers during late June. My best plants were found in a west-country marsh by my son, and did better than all others.

LILIUM SPECIOSUM ALBUM "KRAETZERI."

Of moist peat-lovers I have not as yet got a collection worth mentioning. Such things as mertensia, cimicifuga—the snake root, xerophyllum setifolium, gaultherias, adiantum pedatum, galax aphylla, Sarracenia flava, shortia galacifolia, tiarella, swertia perennis—with mysterious blue-black flowers, and a few others occur; but I lack the stately and important things—the varieties of pieris, for instance, a good collection of heaths, and the many fine American swamp or moisture loving shrubs now successfully grown in this country. My rhododendrons do well in peat, but the local soil is death to them, and they must not even know that it is near.

Lobelia fulgens makes a splendid show in peat, and the varieties of meconopsis—Wallichi and Nepalensis—like a similar spot. Other plants that I possess are gunnera scabra—with a respectful allowance of space for his great achievements—podophyllum peltatum, and p. emodi; rheum emodi and megasea cordifolia. Phormium and solidago rear their heads hard by, and the huge acanthus latifolius also finds a corner. Rodgersia podophylla for some reason sulks; but ferula gigantea—a giant fennel—and heracleum giganteum have established themselves to great advantage. Of course you want far more room than I have got for these things—still, they shall be found, and nobody can honestly say I crowd them or let them crowd their betters. But they should have a riverside or the bank of a large sheet of water to show most of them in real

splendour. Give me plenty of mud in the eye of the sun, and I will grow a jungle of herbaceous monsters that shall amaze you.

The greatest treasure beside my pond is a hardy tree-fern from Australia. It prospers, and asks only for a little protection for stem and crown at times of actual frost. Another fern almost hardy in a snug corner is asplenium nidus avus, the bird's nest. This also came from Australia; and a third grand plant, that rare amaryllid, doryanthes excelsa of the scarlet plume, was of their party. This winters within doors, and to lose any of these things would be a sorrow.

From my dear brother they came—one who knew plants better than I. His great spirit could not abide the limits of a garden. The world was his garden, and he roamed to the uttermost parts of it, and beheld the beauty of nature and the wonder of many growing things. He lived his life against Nature's own wild heart, did man's appointed work, and passed in peace beside the broad Zambesi. Of the race of the pioneers, of the tribe of Thoreau was he, yet of a larger soul and more human than Thoreau. All men that knew him found their spirits leap to him; and many lonely hearts in lonely places mourned when they heard that he had gone. May the savage earth he loved lie light upon him and lift eternal flowers above his tomb; may the fierce sunshine that was his life, pierce the equator's bosom and for ever warm his precious dust.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RED ROCKERY

I HAVE sometimes dared to doubt if Adam was quite the gardener we are accustomed to suppose. A considerable antiquity has thrown some haze over the actual facts, and one would be the last to dispel it; but consider his disadvantages, and ask yourself what you would have felt if brought suddenly face to face with the six thousand genera. Two words must instantly have leapt to your lips: "Bentham" and "Hooker." Then imagine your position on learning that neither Bentham nor Hooker had arrived; that you were standing at the dim beginning of all things; that as yet no science of botany existed.

We have actually nothing named after Adam, except "Adam's needle"; and that should be called "Eve's needle," because there can be no shadow of doubt that it was the Mother of us all who deftly manufactured that first masonic garment from the leaves of ficus. Note her immature judgment in the matter. She had all the fine foliage plants of paradise to select from; Adam might have worn caladium esculentum, or musa, for raiment; Eve might have donned the autumn foliage of vitis Coignetiæ, and trimmed it with exquisite berries coloured ruby or sapphire, topaz

or amethyst. How delicious she would have looked, with the tears in her lovely eyes, and her hair of spun gold glittering down over those scarlet leaves! Even as a small boy I never liked much to consider the cherubim with their flaming swords. Think of bullying the first woman! Picture her dewy loveliness and her broken heart at the moment of expulsion from the only home she had ever known. Why, they ought to have tumbled over one another to rush and comfort her! No, the cherubim may have had excellent qualities, but chivalry was not one of them. As a reigning monarch is reported to have said of another, so we may assert of the cherub: that he is a very good fellow, but, unfortunately, *not* a gentleman.

From a group of yuccas, which led to "Adam's needle" and so to this reflection, we pass without prolonged exercise to my red rockery. Here dwell the things that love partial shade, and are happiest when the sun is veiled from them. Having gazed upon them at dawn, he swiftly passes by, and for the rest of the twenty-four hours does not directly regard them.

Three of the perennial poppy folk first occur to me: stylophorum diphyllum, the two-leaved celandine poppy; sanguinaria canadensis, the bloodroot; and eomecon chionanthus, the cyclamen poppy. Of these, the first has handsome foliage and a fine yellow bloom; the second is a fairy thing, pure white, and like a pigeon's egg in the bud. It opens into a star, and springs singly above the glaucous leaf

THE RED ROCKERY—GENERAL VIEW.

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POLEMONIUM CONFERTUM.
(Var-Mellitum)

that protects its infancy. This puccoon is a common weed in North America, and a mass of it must be beautiful to see. Peat suits it; but in peat the cyclamen poppy disgraces itself, increases at an enormous rate, and proves far too busy underground to do anything worth mentioning above it. The foliage is handsome, but not sufficiently so to satisfy us without the flowers. Eomecon needs adversity to make it bloom. Thermopsis, that lives with it, also throws plenty of subterranean suckers; but its fine, yellow, laburnum-like blossoms freely brighten the shade. Physostegia is also here. An American friend sent me half-a-dozen varieties. But I find them not specially interesting. Virginiana is perhaps the best. Helonias bullata has not been pleased with his place, and his rosy flower-spike refuses to gladden me. Perhaps since "helos," a marsh, is the derivation of his name, I do not give him all the moisture he demands. I shall transfer him to a very damp spot elsewhere, and hope to see him become prosperous with ramondia pyrenaica, soldanella, and certain primroses. Haberlea, from Mount Rhodope, calls for similar treatment. It is a pretty thing, but seldom seen, though it reached this country five-and-twenty years ago. Asarum europæum, of course, does well. This asarabacca is not decorative, but his chocolate bloom has interest. Triosteum perfoliatum is another plant that excites no enthusiasm. The horse gentian it is called, also the feverwort. The flowers are a thought dingy, perhaps, but there is nothing obtrusive or assertive about them. Lobelia syphilitica next

occurs, and I much admire its rich blended shades of blue and purple. There is a hybrid between this and a scarlet lobelia which reached me from somewhere. The colour is a blend of blue and red, yet agreeable; the shape is that of L. fulgens. Lobelia tenuior does well with me in the summer, but this delicate and dainty white-eyed beauty should have a snug spot for her display. Bigelovia graveolens resembles aster linosyris, but is not so handsome; and next to him come two of the polemonium family: Richardsonii and that very beautiful and precious gem, confertum, var. mellitum. This new and rare thing is worthy of great admiration, and soon no September garden will be called really complete without it. It was a glad day when the Rocky Mountains yielded this treasure. A picture will better bring it to you than can I, but note that the blossom is pure white.[1] Many of the clan are good, but none that I have met with so fair as this. P. Richardsonii, by the way, is a synonym of P. humile; yet it is by no means a dwarf plant. Perhaps, however, a nurseryman sent me the wrong one. Too often have such accidents overtaken us all. My plant is pale blue with golden anthers, and stands near two feet high. Homogyne alpina next catches my eye—a little, modest soul, easily mistaken for some intrusive coltsfoot until seen in flower. It is one with petasites alpina, but has no special charm except

[1] Coulter's manual of Rocky Mountain botany describes coralla as pale blue, or sometimes white, and tells us that P. confertum mellitum grows with the type in Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah.

amiability. Tussilago fragrans, by the way, is a hedge weed in this district, and one will often find the sweet, may-scented thing flowering during January and February, far from habitations.

Saxifrages, thymes, and aubretias now help to hide my red rockery; then a few primroses appear. My stock of these is mean, and must be replenished. I best love the pure, drooping lemon bells of sikkimensis, and next to her would choose P. rosea—a flower of delicious and brilliant pink. The gigantic P. japonica, with its crimson scapes of bloom, is also splendid; while of alpines, P. marginata from Switzerland and viscosa from the Pyrenees are both kindly growers and very handsome. The tiny P. Forbesii prospers with me in my red rockery, but needs protection from vermin. Its little dancing flowers, of a rosy lilac, win very general admiration, and appear for nine months in the year. I have often been tempted to try P. floribunda out of doors also, but it makes such a magnificent pot plant that I am refused the experiment. P. farinosa, the sweet, small, bird's-eye primrose, came to me from a kind cousin in Yorkshire, and has consented to settle beside ramondia. Cortusa Matthioli grandiflora is a beautiful being of the primrose order. The colour approaches rather fearfully near magenta; but its habit is fine, and it occupies a post of honour. Mr. A. W. Bennett, in his splendid "Flora of the Alps," figures a cortusa of a pure, pale rose-red. But I fear he would be the first to say that his printer, and not nature, is responsible for this attractive hue.

Cornus canadensis and the pure white Pennsylvanian wood-anemone are fighting for mastery here, and cornus is being beaten. I must take this little dainty dogwood away and give him a place to develop at ease. The anemone is a swift grower, and has all the energy and determination to succeed that marks so many plants I get from America. You may know it and grow it as A. dichotoma. Waldsteinia follows, with trefoil leaves and bright yellow flowers, like a potentilla. Next one of my favourites may be met with. From a dewy dingle beside Dart I took her, and without a murmur she left that haunt of beauty—herself not the least lovely thing, though quite the tiniest, in that scene of flower and song, glittering waters and green leaves. Sibthorpia europæa, the Cornish moneywort, is rather a rare British plant. Professor Nicholson would not have called it "more curious than beautiful" had he seen its fairy-like loveliness spread at the footstools of the great king-fern by river's brink, whence I brought my specimen. It prospers well in a cool, damp spot; but its cousin, S. peregrina, from Madeira, must have a cold frame. A white phyteuma from the Tyrol is here also, and campanulas do well along with it. C. garganica and C. turbinata have to be pushed aside in September for the upspringing blossoms of colchicums.

Pratia repens, a little gem from the Falkland Islands, both flowers and fruits freely. It spreads fast, and after being covered with pure white, lobelia-like flowers, the herb produces pale purple berries of a very ornamental character. Above it dwells that strange,

SIBTHORPIA EUROPÆA.

UNIV. OF MICH.

PRATIA REPENS.

coffee-scented bell-flower, codonopsis ovata, or glossocomia, if you prefer the name. The blossoms are pale slate-blue, with an arrangement of orange and black in the bottom of their chalices. Armerias and hepaticas come next, and call for no particular mention; but the little dicentra cucullaria, or Dutchman's breeches, demands censure for continually disappointing me. It develops abundant foliage, but, unlike most of my American plants, is coy of flowering. Trientalis europæa, a rare British plant, I much admire. The little mite hangs out white stars from among its leaves, and makes a pretty miniature on the red rockery in June. Very small willow herbs follow. At Kew I took a downy seed from one that occurs in the superb rock-garden there. The seed was doing nothing in particular, and would have blown away to some other London suburb without a doubt if I had left it. Therefore I put it in my pocket-book. I hope no fearful penalties will overtake this confession. At any rate, the mite does well, and I can return Kew a hundred seeds for their one, if called upon to do so. Salix herbacea is not a willow-tree on which you could hang your harp, or even your hat, for it only rises to an elevation of an inch and a half. Beside it a real good mat of silene acaulis flourishes, and its lovely green is starred in spring with innumerable brilliant, rosy blossoms. Some wet winter will doubtless destroy it. The only hope is to plant perpendicularly. Loiseleuria procumbens, from Ben Lomond, has not taken the change too kindly, and I fear designs to die. It is

a pleasant little creature, with many synonyms; but should be known after its godfather, the famous French botanist, Loiseleur Deslongchamps. Hard by trails linnæa borealis, the plant the immortal Linnæus selected for his own. With characteristic modesty he chose this tiny thing, to make for ever precious its humble habit and twin rosy flowers upspringing, pendulous and sweet. There is no pleasanter Alpine atom than this, and the least rockery should have it, for honour to that mighty name it bears. The little thing haunts a few habitats in northern England and Scotland; but it is rare and local in the United Kingdom.

A dwarf funkia, whose name I know not, spreads variegated leaves hard by; then coptis occidentalis occurs—a pretty little, moisture-loving soul of the ranunculus order from the Rocky Mountains. The flower is white, and comes in threes; the leaves are also trifoliate. The cut foliage and merry yellow eyes of morisia hypogæa dwell next. It is an alpine found by Professor Moris on the mountains of Sardinia, and introduced—as Mr. Robinson tells us in his grand "English Flower Garden"—by Mrs. Palliser from the Valentino Botanic Gardens at Turin. The plant is hardy, and makes a cheerful show in May.

Various bulbs may be passed over, but certain masses of variegated nepeta are worth mentioning. The plant is often seen as a fringe to the front of the conservatory stage, and looks handsome so; but it is hardy, and will serve for a beautiful covering to steep spots in the rockery.

Gentiana Andrewsi is a fine thing, and young plants are already flowering, though far short of full size; while, hard by, claytonia perfoliata, a little purslane, prospers and spreads shining leaves and scatters racemes of pink flowers in prodigal profusion. Saxifraga Burseriana—the old form—does fairly well in clumps at hand; but I know where it may be seen to better advantage, and rather think it prefers limestone to sandstone.

Isophyrum thalictroides is a pleasant miniature plant, with fern-like foliage and sprightly white flowers lifted above it. This flower enjoys the cool shade of my red rockery; but mitchella repens, a dainty dwarf sent long ago to Linnæus by Dr. Mitchell of Virginia, fails as yet to earn applause. It proceeds heartily about its business, but no little fragrant blossom has peeped forth to win attention. The leaves and habit, however, are pleasant to see. Ourisia coccinea, called after Governor Ouris of the Falkland Islands, is one of a considerable family of ourisias that flourish in New Zealand and Tasmania. They have kin dwelling in the Antarctic regions of South America and the Andes. O. coccinea comes from the Andes of Chili. He arrived in England a year before I did. We are both still practically unknown; but fame has no charm for either of us, and we creep about the surface of the earth and mind our own business in a very contented manner. Ourisia insists upon a moist soil and plenty of shade—differing utterly from me in respect of these predilections. His scarlet flowers are good, and foliage handsome.

Nierembergia rivularis, from La Plata, wanders with the last plant and enjoys similar conditions. Other nierembergias are more beautiful, but I have only this variety with white, yellow-eyed bells. There is no better surface plant for a cool corner, but slugs will go on long pilgrimages to come at it. The lilac nierembergia of Veitch must be a fine thing, but I know it not. Galax aphylla is here too, and flowers well in spring-time with gaultheria Shallon, whose bloom is like his grand relation the arbutus, and whose purple berries are said to make excellent tarts. It may be so, but my solitary specimen, with all the will in the world, cannot produce harvests large enough for such a considerable experiment.

An interesting plant, quite out of place, has grown alongside galax this year and made a large shrub. This is lopezia racemosa, so familiar to those who visit the Riviera. I take cuttings and keep the lopezia, for winter slays it presently. In a pot it flowers freely during the spring. "To the philosophic mind, not captivated with mere show, the flowers of this plant," says Curtis, "will afford a most delicious treat." Rather more than a hundred years ago it arrived at the Apothecaries' Garden, Chelsea, from Mexico through Madrid. To the botanist it presents a fascinating theme for inquiry; while the flower-lover sees bright, rose-coloured racemes of cheerful inflorescence above good green leaves of the habit somewhat of enchanter's nightshade. But lopezia is really not of much use out of doors with me, though in full sun I think it would

THE RED ROCKERY—THE STEPS.

UNIV. OF NOH.

do better. A great cerinthe, or honeywort, springs up annually here too. I cannot remember whence it came, but I think, dear Mrs. Kent, that I have to thank you for this very handsome plant. All who see it cry out for a seedling, and such is the cerinthe's generosity that all can be supplied.

Certain evening primroses next roam about and fall over a shelf of rock. The beautiful lemon œnothera macrocarpa mingles with O. taraxacifolia, the dandelion-leaved species from Chili, and both do well enough. Geraniums and ferns lead me to eriogonum umbellatum, a little herbaceous perennial with yellow flowers from the North-West of America, and next to him comes calophaca wolgarica, a Siberian, pea-flowered plant that is usually grafted on laburnum. Mine has not thus far distinguished itself, and I have yet to see the blossom. It is praised for its fine flowers and subsequent red seed-pods. Rubus xanthocarpus hangs over this steep part of the rockery. It belongs to North China, and has white flowers and yellow fruits. Another beautiful plant is here: anemonopsis macrophylla, from Japan. It has small drooping white blossoms faintly touched with purple.

One may mark also an andromeda, antirrhinum asarina, biscutella lævigata, callixene polyphylla, the fragrant cedronella, dalibarda repens, dodecatheons of various sorts, a dianthus or two, that hate the shade and ought not to be here, and more saxifrages. I wish I could write a chapter about these last alone, but there is no room to do so.

About a flight of rough steps that now occur are

various plants of no particular account, such as the handsome common form of wahlenbergia, the mean and useless vincetoxicum, tropæolum tuberosum, the Peruvian nasturtium, and some Wichuraiana roses —though why these have taken Wichuray's name instead of the far pleasanter one of Luciæ, after Madame Lucie Savatier, I do not learn. They come originally from Japan and China, and are very beautiful, late-flowering toys for steps, pillar, or pergola.

But you will observe that I make no serious mention of roses in this book. They are with us to the number of a few hundred plants: hybrid perpetuals, teas, hybrid teas, and climbers; but, as I feel concerning lilies before the work of Dr. Wallace or Miss Jekyll, so, when roses are the matter, the august names of Paul, Hole, and Foster-Melliar rise to the mind. There is another sufficient reason why one should be silent: I am not a rosarian in any real sense, and have never so much as cut or budded a stock. But I am inventing a scheme by which it may be possible to get more than twenty-four hours into the day. If this plan becomes perfected and published to the world, then we shall all bud our own roses, and may even find time to chronicle our experiences.

Speaking of the late Dean Hole, I am reminded that in one of his fragrant volumes he has quoted from an ancient jest-book put upon the world long since by myself. The author, they tell me, was forgot when the story came to be repeated; and therefore

I may be pardoned for claiming my lost child again and placing him, for protection, within the covers of his parent's book. Did a section on vegetables occur, he would belong to that, but, since the scope of this work precludes such a thing, the tale may creep in here.

It has to do simply with salads and a station-master, and it is the sort of nonsense we write when we are young and irresponsible, without any literary character to lose.

He was a serious-minded man; his name was Jinks; and he lorded it over a little station on the South-Eastern Railway in Kent. There he did immense good, converting engine-drivers and guards, and even bringing an occasional director to see his many faults. He had a strip of garden which ran along near the main line, and he employed it to proclaim and publish great moral truths, so that the thoughtless might be improved and the thoughtful edified as they rolled by. In the early part of the year one would always look for virtuous maxims from that garden, and lofty ideas. During a certain April I recollect Jinks had "Little children, love one another" worked out in cos lettice; while the following year he arranged "Watch and pray" in spring onions; and very beautiful and affecting it was. At my suggestion he did "Patience is a virtue" with a scheme of beetroot, and not only did it look well, but was considered a very proper precept to impress upon travellers by that lethargic line.

Jinks told me in confidence one winter that he

proposed eclipsing all former efforts in his garden during the coming spring. He was going, he said, to advertise the fact that "God is Love" in letters six feet long, composed entirely of early spinach. I praised this thought highly, and declared the idea was worthy of him. The time came, and every eye was turned to the bank whereon the station-master made his annual effort. Presently from the earth began to sprout pale leaves, and day followed day, and the legend grew, yet in no manner suggested the words that we had been led to expect. Finally dastard deeds blazed forth, and a great truth, quite different to that intended, burst from the teeming earth. It was merely this :

"Jinks is a silly Ass."

The malice of the act, of course, lay in the vegetable selected, for this crime had been committed with horse-radishes, and by the time that its victim grasped the fact, and set to work madly to grub them up, these coarse herbs had proceeded after their kind, and acquired a grip of the soil that earthquakes might hardly have unsettled. Jinks did all he could; he pretended to laugh at it, and kept telling people that he had forgotten all about it; he ploughed the land, and planted it with potatoes; yet each succeeding spring saw that virulent and malignant stuff struggle up again to scream out, as it were, to every train in the time-table, that Jinks lacked intelligence. His spirit failed at last, and he took his life. He wandered down the line one day at a time when an express

was slightly overdue. He crept out of sight into a secluded cutting; laid his head upon the cold metals; waited with the patience of despair; and ultimately—starved to death there.

This, however, is a flagrant digression. To return to alpines, when a gardener has immensely added to your pleasure and is still not weary of well-doing, one must name him to the world, and refer other people to him, that they too may win some of the delight that he dispenses. In this case, two famous gardeners command my admiration, and I advise all who want strong, well-grown, and exceedingly low-priced alpine plants to go to Messrs. Stansfield Brothers of Southport for them. They supply an immense variety of rare and beautiful things; their quality is of the best, and in the matter of saxifrages and wonderful treasures from the Pyrenees and Rocky Mountains, they stand alone; as they do in the remarkable moderation of their prices.

CHAPTER XIV

OF MANY THINGS

IF the fittest only survive in Nature—and who doubts it?—then surely your green-fly is about the fittest thing that ever made glad the glowing bosom of June. Herr Thiele has set it down that the green-fly can be destroyed in eighty different ways; but the immortal creature laughs at death. You may clean a rose tree absolutely, walk round your garden, and then return, to find grandfather green-flies awaiting you. Their lives are short, but they get an immense deal into them. Passionate love of offspring is their greatest virtue. I suppose that a childless green-fly would be a thing new to science.

I had hoped to discuss this and other such like plagues at length; but, after all, how little else matters in a garden if you have children there! Lesser scourges sink to absolute insignificance when weighed against them.

Prime of garden pests is the human boy. In the pupa stage this creature evadeth every lure, and causeth much anguish of mind within the confines of cultivated ground. He hath no eye to distinguish between the grass plat and the garden knot, but trampleth indifferently upon either, and loveth best

to frisk over soil wherein rare and curious seeds are germinating. Glass hath an affinity or attraction for him, and when he breaketh the same, he lifteth up his voice shrilly in merriment; but maketh still louder sounds to indicate anguish, when captured and chastened. At the season of Spring he haunteth shrubberies, and leapeth out upon the innocent traveller with horrid, inarticulate sounds. The ear may mark his unseen progress through plantations by the snapping of green boughs and by the outcry of parent birds. Occasionally, in his efforts to secure the nurseries of fowl upon lofty trees or precipices, he falleth and breaketh his neck; but this seldom happeneth, because he hath a feline plenitude of lives, and, in the art of self-preservation, is ever very nimble, discreet, and unscrupulous. During the autumnal months he affecteth the place of fruit, and by strategy may there be taken at any time in the day with full pockets and full cheeks. He hath no special taste in fruits, but devoureth with the impartial profusion of the caterpillar and canker worm. The birds of the air surpass him by their wise patience, for they know to an hour when the perfection of plum or pear has come; but not so he.

The human girl in lesser sort partaketh with the boy, but, separated from him, doth venture upon a humbler flight, and confines her trespass within more reasoned limits. She weareth short petticoats, and hath long legs cased in black stockings. During the grub stage she is exceedingly fleet of foot—so much so, that the custodian of mature years may by

no means come at her single-handed. If harassed on the open border she betaketh herself to trees, and, from the boughs thereof, uttereth scorn of her pursuers. As the boy, so she also courteth the society of lesser vertebrates, and may oftentimes be seen at twilight leading forth coneys, caveys, and white rats to take their ease upon the borders when the guardian of the same hath made an end of his toil. For many years she persisteth in these ways, yet a time shall arrive when her hair goeth up and her frock cometh down. Thereupon she is translated in the twinkling of an eye, and haunteth the garden close no more.

Aristotle has affirmed concerning boys and girls that they are prone to pity, an assertion that may with deference be questioned; but he also saith that our young ones do push everything to an excess; and this I hold to be indubitably true. There is no cure for the human boy save time. Then, by exceeding slow stages, he groweth into the adult organism, and either turneth from his mysterious courses toward justification of existence, or else, as too often happeneth, doth wax in wickedness, as well as in the power to perform it.

There are other banes of the garden, and some have been already mentioned, but, perhaps excepting a garden party, none can compare with these described. It was a hope of mine to devote a whole chapter to the subject; but here is the end of my little book, while half a hundred matters still clamour to be discussed. I was just getting into my stride, to

adopt an athletic metaphor. My note-books regard me with reproach; many growing things wave their boughs to catch my eye; the annuals are especially disappointed that no place has been found for them. I must write the Book of the Annual for Mr. John Lane, if a better man has not already tackled that great subject. For the present, to my sincere regret, this large class of flowers cannot be discussed, though I have rich memoranda concerning the more uncommon beauties amongst them.

Again, I was going to tell you things that I have gleaned concerning the world cultivation of Mint; of mole crickets and their manners; of pearls in cocoa-nuts; of M. Henri Theulier's experiments on the germination of seeds by electricity; and of much else to be gleaned from the amazing journals of the Royal Horticultural Society. You must, however, immediately become a Fellow, if you regard the garden as a serious part of life; and I shall be proud to propose you. There is nothing like one of the Society's lordly tomes for correcting our horticultural perspective, and teaching us how much there is to know, and how ridiculously little we of the rank and file have yet acquired. Then join at once. If not already a Fellow of this king among Societies, take my hand and suffer me to lead you to the Rev. W. Wilks, M.A., the famous Secretary. You may approach this grand old gardener without fear. He will beam upon you, welcome you as a brother or sister, and anon crown you with the distinction of fellowship. Remember also what you might achieve hereafter. As the field-

marshal's bâton is in the private's knapsack, so the least gardener amongst us may presently rise to fame and to glory. There is no reason why even you should not some day earn the magic letters, V.M.H., and become for the rest of your life one of the sixty-three great gardeners who have achieved the Victoria Medal of Honour. If, in your benighted ignorance, you ask, "Why sixty-three?" the answer is that this number celebrates the full years of Queen Victoria's glorious reign.

Glance with me once more into my garden as we walk to the gate. Here is Fusi-Kin-Go, in many respects the most interesting tree that can adorn any estate. With me he is but an infant, ten feet high; at Kew a glorious specimen, fifty feet high and more, shakes out its gigantic maiden-hair-like foliage nigh the great conservatories. Gingko biloba was separated from the conifers in 1852, and since that date has enjoyed unique dignity. Its isolated position among existing flora, its narrow geographical distribution, and its terrific antiquity, make it a thing apart, crowned with mystery and the hoar of eld. It scarcely exists out of cultivation, but is common as a sacred tree in the gardens and temples of the Far East. Gingko's fossil remains occur abundantly in Mesozoic and Tertiary rocks; it follows, therefore, that the strange things which flew in air aforetime were familiar with this tree; that the flying dragons of the prime rested in his boughs. Without doubt the gay pterodactyl clung to his branches and nibbled his fruit. One may also imagine that strange feathered thing, where bird and

lizard blend — the archæopteryx — sitting aloft and raising the first crude attempts at bird music amid the gingko's foliage; while at its feet the maternal dinosaur perhaps laid her gigantic eggs.[1] This prehistoric tree may be yours for two shillings. Can you hesitate? If only for the sake of the improving conversation arising from such a noble spectacle, the plant should adorn every garden capable of growing it.

Round this corner is a fig tree, and you will observe that I have caged him in. This was done to prevent countless birds from depriving us of the crop. Until the thought of building for this tree a house of galvanised wire occurred to me, we had no figs worth mentioning; now the thrushes, blackbirds, and starlings sit outside when the fruit is purple and say harsh things; but we eat the figs. The idea of a cage is, I have since found, far from new. Gilpin, in his "Forest Scenery," tells us how that the deanery garden of Winchester held a great and ancient fig tree in 1757. Through a succession of deans this tree was cased up and sheltered both from robbers and from frost. "The wall to which it was nailed was adorned with many inscriptions in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, alluding to such passages of the sacred writings as do honour to the fig tree. After having been presented with several texts of Scripture, the reader was informed by way of climax, that in the year 1623, King James I. tasted of the fruit of this fig tree

[1] *Laid her eggs.* If she did lay them. Experts differ concerning dinosaur's family arrangements.

with great pleasure." That paltry rascal never deserved to see respectable fruit or walk in an honest dean's garden. Concerning figs, if you want a botanical fairy story, endeavour to secure "The Phenomena of Fertilization in Ficus Roxburghii," by Dr. D. D. Cunningham, F.R.S. It is a wonderful piece, and I have felt inclined to take off my hat to a fig tree ever since reading it.

From fig to phytolacca is a jump, but this Virginian poke-weed must be dragged in, because I have a charming picture of him. The red ink plant—for that is another alias—has mean, greenish inflorescence and a big, coarse habit of growth; but his charm lies in the elongated clumps of shining, blackberry-like fruit that ripen with September. It is a strange, interesting, and hardy herb, but poisonous. It will grow anywhere, in anything, and its fruit, mixed with a few of the dazzling scarlet corals of Italian arum, makes a very remarkable decoration. Veratrum nigrum is another fine thing—far superior in distinction to V. album of the same family. Its spikes of deep chocolate, touched with golden anthers, and the magnificent, crimped, pleated leaves, produce a very worthy specimen plant if due attention is paid to it. Bees and other insects seek the flowers with great assiduity, and are always flocking about it and gathering honey or pollen.

Speaking of decorative things, I designed a note upon that ocular indigestion so often produced in a conservatory by scattering instead of massing the contents. The ingredients are mixed like a plum-

PHYTOLACCA DECANDRA.

READY FOR THE VASES—OCTOBER.

pudding as a rule, but nothing can be less effective. Take the usual spring show of cineraria, primula, daffodil, deutzia, azalea mollis, and spiræa. Imagine fifty pots of each all mingled; then separate them, mass each after his kind, and see what an enormously improved effect you have achieved. This may be elementary, but how few regard it. Even such things as acer and ferns, added for the sake of the foliage, I would not muddle up with the flowers, but arrange in groups behind or before them.

As to cut flowers, a word may be uttered in all humility. My opinion is valueless, but the lady of the garden has ideas on this subject, and they are worth considering. Never allow more than two sorts together under any possible circumstance. Indeed, I think the Japanese would not permit even two; but certain combinations are so magnificent, that two may be conceded if the end justifies the blend. The best effects seem to be won by combinations of light and heavy blossom. Thus good star asters and amaryllis belladonna go very beautifully together; cactus dahlias and cosmos, or eupatorium, are a pleasant mixture if the colour is properly considered. You want lightness and delicacy of form in the smaller flower, richness of hue and dignity in the larger. Sweet-peas and the finer varieties of heuchera blend nobly; but, of course, you would have peas each of one colour alone. To mix sweet-peas is a relic of the past and not good. Keep them separate in their colours. With roses you must put nothing but their own leaves. Never mix roses. You always do,

of course, like nearly everybody else; but try bowls of the different sorts alone, and you will perceive the force of this advice. A dinner-table of one rose is a pleasant thing; but adorn it with a dozen varieties and you sink into the commonplace at once. Never overdo the leaves in your vases. It is a relic of mid-Victorian times, when we used maiden-hair with everything and thought it lovely. I should like to write a list of a hundred notable combinations for you; but it is improbable that you would value them. You have your own ideas. Yet try some good feathery chrysanthemum of medium size with flowering eulalia zabrina. Mingle them deftly in a large Munstead vase, and you cannot fail to be pleased. And once more—my own favourite for winter work. Pluck iris stylosa and pure white Christmas roses; deck your dinner-table richly, and people of soul will give no thought to the baked meats.

Here then, at the gate of my garden, permit me to take courteous leave—to bow you out, in fact. We have spent overmuch time with my toy, and I appreciate the compliment that you have paid me. Yet you and I shall agree that no sensible man puts away all childish things. Gardening may be permitted as a recreation even to the sober-minded and serious spirit. It is not an intellectual pursuit, but it can be conducted in a very intelligent manner; and, as an occupation for the amateur, it holds its own against games of skill, against sport, and even against politics. A time indeed must come when a man's ardour cools a little; when his amusement is to put